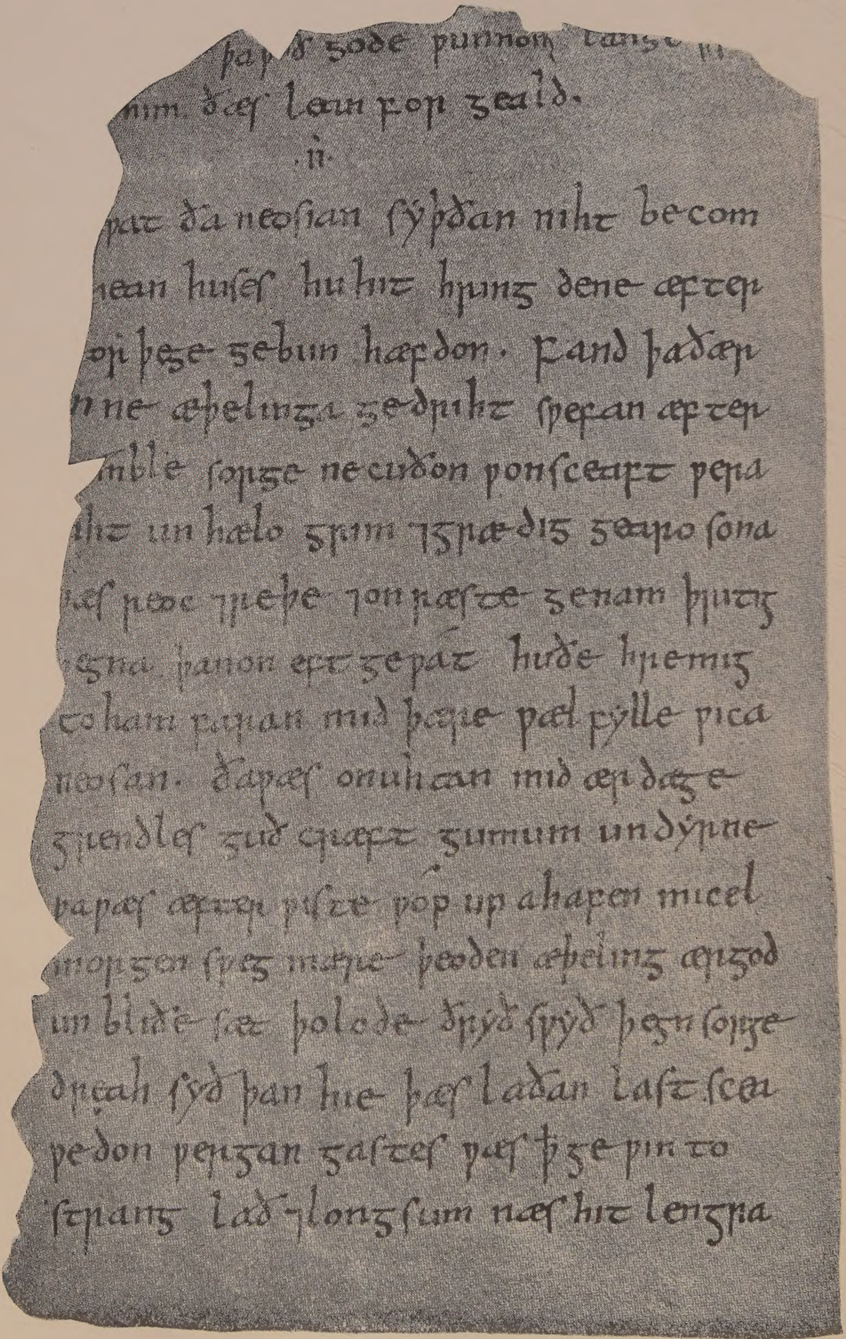

þa ƿið gode ƿunnon lange þra
him. ðæs lean for geald.
.ii.
ƿat ða neosian syþðan niht becom
hean huses hu hit hring dene æfter
or þege gebun hæfdon. Fand þa ðær
ne æþelinga ge driht sƿefan æfter
mble sorge ne cuðon ƿonsceaft ƿera
ht un hælo grim ⁊ grædig gearo sona
æs reoc ⁊ reþe ⁊ on ræste genam þritig
egna þanon eft geƿat huðe hremig
to ham faran mid þære ƿæl fylle ƿica
neosan. ða ƿæs on uhtan mid ær dæge
grendles guð cræft gumum undyrne
þa ƿæs æfter ƿiste ƿop up ahafen micel
morgen sƿeg mære þeoden æþeling ærgod
un bliðe sæt þolode ðryð sƿyð þegn sorge
dreah syð þan hie þæs laðan last scea
ƿedon ƿergan gastes ƿæs ꝥ geƿin to
strang lað ⁊ longsum næs hit lengra

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THE KABBALAH

BY SAMUEL A. BINION

The mass of literature and of learning which the word Kabbalah designates is abstruse and difficult; but a knowledge of it is essential to an understanding of the Hebrew thought in the middle centuries of our era, and also of its influence in Europe during the same and later periods. The fascination which the doctrines grouped under the name Kabbalah had for the mystic, the theologian, and the philosopher, has hardly yet passed entirely away. The reason for this is obvious. This Hebrew esoteric philosophy sought to explain the INFINITE in terms comprehensible to men. The sublime names of God in the Old Testament awed the world, and the attributes attached to those Divine names enriched it. A study of the doctrines of the Kabbalah opened and illuminated the Bible. It enlarged the religious conception of the Christian world.

That the pure theosophy of the Kabbalah shared the fate of other theosophies, and was prostituted to wonder-working and to "practical" uses, was to be expected. It is the common fate of all theosophies.

My subject divides itself into two branches: first, the Theoretical Kabbalah, an esoteric theosophy; and second, the Practical Kabbalah, the various treatises on which comprise the great majority of the books belonging to the subject: and I will try to state broadly what the Kabbalah is, and indicate its various stages and the uses made of it. The word Kabbalah (also spelled Cabala and Qabalah) is derived from the Hebrew verb *kabbal* (to receive). In addition to the received Hebrew Scripture designated as 'Torah Shebikthabh' (the Written Law), there is the 'Torah sheb'al* pĕh' (the Oral or Traditional Law). The Rabbis affirm that both laws were derived from the same source, having been communicated to Moses by the Almighty on Mount Sinai.

*NOTES.—The *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, preceded by an apostrophe ('), have each a peculiar sound which has no equivalent in Western languages. The approximate sound can only be produced by pronouncing the above-named vowels with the assistance of the soft palate and throat.

35 The Hebrew alphabet has no vowels. The vowel sounds are indicated by signs above or below the letters.

The Talmud declares (Tract. ‹Pirke Abhoth› or Patristic Chapters, Chap. i., 1) that *Mosheh kibbel* (Moses received) the Law from Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua; that Joshua transmitted it to the Elders; the Elders to the Prophets; and the Prophets to the «Men of the Great Congregation,» who flourished from the end of the sixth century B. C. till the time of Rabbi Shimeon Hatsadik (Simeon the Just), who was the last of the line, and died 300 B. C.

The famous Hebrew philosopher Maimonides, who died in the earlier part of the thirteenth century A. D., gives us the names of the receivers of the ‹Oral Law› since Simeon the Just, as follows:—Simeon the Just bequeathed the tradition to the Sophrim (Scribes); the Scribes to the Hakhamim (Wise Men) or Tanaim (Repeaters). The Hakhamim flourished between 70 and 220 A. D., and were the composers of the ‹Mishna› (Repetition), which was compiled by Rabbi Jehudah the Holy, about the close of the second century A. D. By them it was transmitted to the Amorāïm (Speakers), the authors of the voluminous commentary on the ‹Mishna› called ‹Gemara› (Completion). The ‹Mishna› and ‹Gemara› form the great Jewish National Code of laws, ethics, and traditions known as the Talmud. This great work was completed by Rabina, Rab Ashi, and the latter's son Mar, the last of the Amorāïm, 365-427 A. D. The Amorāïm were succeeded by the Sabboraïm, or Rabbanan Sabboraï (Reasoners), who arranged, sifted, and gave the final touch to the great work. The Sabboraïm period is 500–689 A. D., followed by the Geônim (Magnificent or Eminent Men). The latter made no alteration in the letter nor in the text of the Talmud, but confined themselves to writing many works explanatory of it. The Geônim period is from 689 to 895 A. D.

Maimonides's reason for the composition of his *magnum opus* called ‹Yad Hahazakah› (Mighty Hand), or ‹Mishnah Torah› (the Repeated Law), is as follows (Preface):—«On account of the troubles and persecutions, the wisdom of our learned men is lost and the knowledge of our sages is hidden; so that certain parts of the exposition of the ‹Talmud› by the Geônim became obscured, and great confusion had arisen in their interpretation. . . . Therefore,» he adds, «since the Rabbis in captivity cannot communicate on account of war and distance, . . . with the help of my Creator, and being well versed in all those works, I have endeavored to collate and explain in the clearest possible manner all that which was said since the time of our Rabbi Jehudah the Holy» (*i. e.*, since the compilation of the ‹Mishna,› to the last of the Geônim).

Thus in the writings of the Rabbis, the entire ‹Oral Law,› including the Babylonian and the Jerusalem Talmuds, Midrashim, etc., is designated as ‹Kabbalah› (the Received Doctrines): but the name is now applied to that part of tradition which treats, first, of the

«Heavenly Chariot» and throne as described by the Prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah (Ezek. i.; Isaiah vi. 1–4); second, of the Work of Creation, embodied in the first chapter of Genesis; and third, of the whole system of the symbolic interpretation of Scripture adopted by the 'Zohar' and its commentaries.

The Kabbalah is the technical name of the Jewish Esoteric Philosophy. It is divided into two principal parts: the 'Iyūnith (Theoretical or Speculative), and the Ma'asiyoth (Active or Practical). It was also denominated Hakhmah Nistarah (Hidden Wisdom), because its study was hidden from the profane, and known only to the few «elect» who received it by tradition. As the initials of Hakhma Nistarah, H. N., form the Hebrew word HeN (Grace), the modern Kabbalists designate the Kabbalah by that short but meaning cryptogram.

Separating from its principal dogmas the accretions which modern Kabbalistic writers added, and freeing it from its parasite, the pretended wonder-workings of the 'Practical Kabbalah,' we shall behold in the principal doctrines of the 'Theoretical Kabbalah' a pure theosophy far superior to the Trimūrti (the triad of the Vedas), and in many respects not conflicting with the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

THE PRINCIPAL DOGMA OF THE KABBALAH

The starting-point of the 'Theoretical Kabbalah' is the nature of the Deity prior to the creation of the universe. The Kabbalists designate him as the EN-SOPH (the Infinite), without any Dimyon (shape or form) whatsoever. He was above being. He was the Aīn (nothing). Yet in that non-existent state he is designated as the 'Ilath Kol Ha-'Iloth . . . Sibath Kol Hassiboth (the Cause of all Causes).

This doctrine according to our understanding is paradoxical, since, as the Hindu philosophy has it, *Nāvastuno vastu siddhih* (Nothing is made of nothing); the terms «manifestation» or «will» imply «being.» The Kabbalists nevertheless affirm that he *willed* to become known, and the Concealed of all Concealed *manifested* himself by means of Ten Sephīroth (Emanations).

THE TEN SEPHĪROTH

The exact meaning of the Hebrew word Sephīrah, plural Sephīroth, is in dispute. According to some it is derived from the Hebrew verb *saphar* (to count); while others render it «declaration,» from *sapēr* (to declare) as in Psalm xix. 1, Hash-shamaim Mesaprim, . . . «The heavens declare the glory of God.» Others again translate it «sphere» or «sapphire.» This name, the Kabbalists affirm, was given by no less an authority than the Prophet Elijah himself: in addressing himself to the Deity he exclaimed, « Thou art he who hast brought forth the ten things which we call Sephīroth, in order to illuminate the world.» (Second pref. of ‹ Tikûnē Zohar.›)

In order to introduce the reader into the maze of the Sephīritic Spheres and facilitate his progress therein, a diagram of the Ten Sephīroth is inserted on page 8429. This will assist to a clearer understanding of their emanation, their coming into existence, their Divine Scriptural names, their functions in the « worlds,»— Briah (Creation), Yetsirah (Formation), and 'Asiyah (Action),--and their position in the Adam-Kadmon (the Archetypal Man); or the 'Olam Ha-Atsilôth (the World of Emanations). A complete understanding of this diagram will reward the reader and give him the key to the foundation of the whole theosophy. It is very easy of comprehension, if followed by the description and guided by the arrows shown.

The first « Emanation,» or « Intelligence,» is designated the Nekūdah (point); which the Kabbalah identifies with the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Yod ('), the first letter of the Tetragrammaton I H V H, the numerical value of which is equal to 10 (see diagram of values), symbolizing the Ten Sephīroth by which the world was created. The ‹ Zohar › (i. 15*a* and 16*b*) describes the manifestation of the first « Intelligence » thus: « The air surrounding the ‹ Concealed of all Concealed › (the En-Soph), was cleft and it was not cleft. He was absolutely unknown until from the midst of the cleft a luminous Nekūdah appeared. After this he (the Concealed) continued in his unknown state. This point is therefore designated the Rēshith (beginning), because it is the primordial word of all.»

Thus it follows that since the Nekūdah Rishônah (the first luminous point) directly emanated from the En-Soph, it must possess the same nature as the source whence it proceeded. This « luminous point » the Kabbalists call the « First Sephīrah,» out of which nine other Sephīroth emanated in succession. It was by the agency of these Ten Sephīroth, called the Adam Kadmon (the Archetypal Man), that the universe was created.

Rabbi Simeon* opens his mystic discourse on this subject as follows: « What is meant by the words, ‹ I *am* my beloved's and his desire *is* towards me›? (Canticles, vii. 10). It means that all the days that we are joined together in this world we are united by one bond with the Holy One, blessed be he. Therefore is it written, ‹And his desire is towards me.› »

While thus expounding the Divine truth, the ‹ Zohar › relates (iii. 288*a*): « The Deity and his holy company came to listen to the

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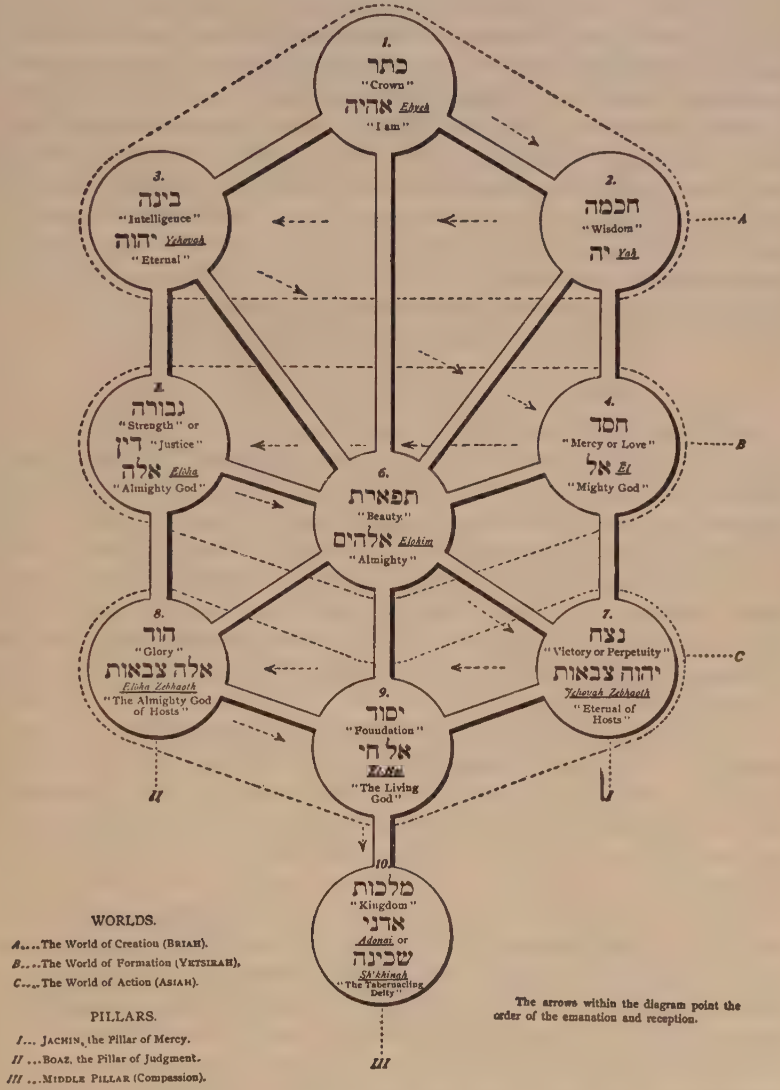
*Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai is the reputed author of the great Kabbalistic work called ‹ Zohar › or ‹ Sohar › (Brilliant Light).

אין־סוף
THE EN-SOPH
"THE INFINITE"



WORLDS.

A.....The World of Creation (BRIAH).
B.....The World of Formation (YETSIRAH).
C.....The World of Action (ASIAH).

PILLARS.

I... JACHIN, the Pillar of Mercy.
II ...BOAZ, the Pillar of Judgment.
III ...MIDDLE PILLAR (Compassion).

The arrows within the diagram point the order of the emanation and reception.

S. A. BINION

exposition of the secret words and the praises of the Ancient Holy One.» These secret words were as follows:—«The Mystery of all Mysteries has been and is separated from all; yet he is not separated. Everything is attached to him, for he is everything. He is the Ancient of all ancient; the Unknown of all unknown. He assumed a form, yet he is without form. He assumed a form in order to maintain all, and yet he has no form because he is incomprehensible [literally, because He does not exist]. When he assumed a form [the Nekūdah] he caused to emanate from it nine flaming lights; and those lights that proceeded from him diffused their [constantly increasing] luminosity in every direction. Just as a burning lamp spreads its glow to all sides; but if one approach to examine the diffused light, nothing is found but the burning lamp. So also is he the Ancient Holy [One]. He is the Heavenly light, the Mystery of all Mysteries. If we try to comprehend him we cannot [because] he does not exist, except in those diffused lights which are visible and [at the same time] hidden; and these are called the Holy Name,—they are all in one.»

The Explanation of the Adam Kadmon

The uppermost Sephīrah is called Kether (the Crown). It emanated, as already stated, directly from the En-Soph, and is styled Nekūdah Rishônah (the First Point). This Nekūdah existed from all eternity. Hence its Divine appellation in Scripture, A H I H, Ehyeh: rendered «I Am» (Exodus iii. 14). It is also variously known as the Arikh Anpin (the Great, or Long-Faced); 'Atiqa (the Ancient); Rēsha Hivra (White-head); Rôm Ma'ālah (the Most High). In the Heavenly Chariot it is represented by the Hayoth Hak-Koddesh (the Holy Creatures), and the Archangel Metatron; its position in the Adam-Kadmon is the Head.

From Kether (the Crown) emanated the second Sephīrah, Hakhmah (Wisdom). It is of the masculine nature. Its position in the Adam-Kadmon is the right shoulder or breast, and it is represented by the Divine name *Y* a *H* (the Lord—Isaiah xxvi. 4; Exodus xvii. 16), the *first two* letters of the Tetragrammaton I H V H (Jehovah—the Eternal).

Out of «Wisdom» sprung up the third Sephīrah, Binah (Intelligence). Its Divine name in Scripture is the *whole* Tetragrammaton I H V H (Jehovah), and in the Heavenly Hosts it is represented by Arēlim, rendered in the Authorized Version «the Valiant Ones» (Isaiah xxxiii. 7), and the Archangel Raziel. Its position in the Adam Kadmon is the left shoulder or breast, and it is of the feminine nature. Hence it has another appellation A M (Em—Mother, or Supernal Mother), out of which the following seven intelligences were developed. Thus the *full name* of Jehovah was not known until the third Sephīrah appeared, and the first Trinity of three triads, which embraces the 'Olam Habriah (World of Creation) as typified by Em (mother), was completed. The Talmud (Tract. Berachoth, ix. 57*a*) renders the Hebrew word A M in Proverbs ii. 3, « Thou shalt call ‘Intelligence’ (Binah) thy ‘mother.’ » The Authorized Version reads I M, meaning « if » — « If thou criest for knowledge . . . »

From the third Sephīrah is derived the fourth, the name of which is Hesed (Mercy or Love). Its position in the Archetypal Man is the right arm. Its Divine name in Scripture is El (Mighty God); it is the first syllable of Elohim — Almighty. In the Heavenly Host it is represented by Hashmālim (Ezekiel i. 4) and the Archangel Zadkiel. It is of the same nature as Hakhmah (Wisdom).

The fifth Sephīrah is of the feminine principle. It emanated from the fourth Sephīrah; and is called Gebhūrah (Strength), also Dīn (Justice), and Pahad (Fear). Its Divine name is E L H — Eloha (Almighty God). In the Heavenly Host it is represented by the Seraphim and the Archangel Kamael, and forms the left arm of the Adam-Kadmon.

The sixth Sephīrah represents in the Adam-Kadmon the region embracing the chest and downward. Its name is Tiphereth (Beauty). Its divine name is Elohim (Almighty), and in the Heavenly Host it is represented by Shinanim or Malakhim (Ps. lxviii. 17), and the Archangel Michael. These three, Justice, Mercy, and Beauty, form the « Second Trinity, » called 'Olam Murgash (Sensuous World — literally, the world which is felt), because it represents moral faculties.

The seventh Sephīrah is the first of the third Trinity, and is called Netsah (Victory, or Perpetuity). Its principle is like its immediate predecessor's, and it corresponds to the right leg of the Adam Kadmon. Its Divine name is Jehovah Zebhaoth (Eternal of Hosts); among the Heavenly Hosts it is represented by Tarshishim and the Archangel Haniel. From the seventh emanates the eighth Sephīrah, which is called Hôd (Glory, or Splendor), and — like Gebhūrah and Binah — it is of feminine nature. Its Divine name is Eloha Zebhaoth (Almighty God of Hosts). Among the Heavenly Hosts it is represented by B'nē Elohim (Sons of the Almighty) and the Archangel Raphael; and out of this beamed forth the ninth, called Yesod (Foundation), the position of which in the Adam-Kadmon is in the part comprising the reproductive sphere. This, with the previous two, forms the third Trinity of the Adam-Kadmon, and is called the 'Olam Hamutb'a (the Natural or Material World). Its Scriptural name is Shaddai (the All-Sufficient), or El-Hai (the Living God); and in the Heavenly Hosts it is represented by the Kerûbim (Cherubim) and the Archangel Gabriel.

The tenth is the lowermost Sephīrah, and it is said to possess all the life principles of the preceding nine. It is called Malkhuth (Kingdom), and is known as the Sh'khinah (the Tabernacling Deity). Its Scriptural name is Adonai (the Lord). In the Heavenly Host it is represented by the Cherubim and the Archangel Metatron, the same as of the first Sephīrah.

The Angel Metatron, whose name is equivalent to the name of God by Gematria (that is, by numerical value), is represented in the first Sephīrah (the Crown) as well as in the last (Kingdom). His functions therefore are not only in the highest spheres of the Briatic and Yetsiratic (creative and formative) worlds, but he also governs the Asiyatic (active) world. The harmony of the universe is caused by Him. Christian Kabbalists identify him with Christ, the «Angel of the Lord,» the Sar Ha-panim (Zechariah iii. 1). Its place in the Adam-Kadmon is the feet, and also comprises the harmony of the complete Adam-Kadmon.

It will thus be seen that each of the ten Sephīroth emanated from each other in regular succession, and in their totality form the 'Olam Ha-Atsiloth (the «world of emanations» or «derivations»). The meaning of «Atsiloth» is in dispute. The word occurs only once in the Bible, Jeremiah xxxviii. 12, where its translation «armholes» is doubtful. Some scholars variously render it «wrists,» or «knuckles,» or «the juncture of the fingers with the hand.» (*Cf.* Gesenius, *sub voce* «Atsil.») The last rendering, however, seems to be more in accordance with the adopted word «emanation,» *i. e.*, «separation,» just as the united phalanges separate and form ten fingers. (*Cf.* 'Sepher Yetsirah,' Mishnah 3, where the ten Sephīroth are actually compared to the ten fingers, «five and five,» of the hands.) It was this form of the «Archetypal Man,» the Kabbalists affirm, which the Prophet Ezekiel beheld in his vision on the river Chebar (Ezek. i.).

The Adam-Kadmon is also sometimes designated as the Ets Hayim (the Tree of Life). The branches of the tree are three in number. They are called 'Amūdim (Pillars). The pillar on the right is composed of the three Sephīroth possessing the masculine nature, and is called the «Pillar of Mercy.» It is also named Jachin (as in the Temple at Jerusalem, 1 Kings vii. 21). The pillar on the left is composed of the three Sephīroth possessing the feminine nature, and is called the «Pillar of Judgment,» also Boaz (ibid.); while the four Sephīroth between the two side pillars (Crown, Beauty, Foundation, and Kingdom), form the «Middle Pillar.»

The Ten Sephīroth in their complete state are designated as the «World of Emanations,» and are also known as the «King and Queen.» They are typified by the masculine and feminine potencies in the right and left pillars and by the four middle Sephīroth which unite them. The Adam-Kadmon, in his complete state, becomes the connecting link between the non-creative En-Soph and creation, by means of four worlds which evolved from him, and of which I have spoken heretofore, namely:—

'Olam Ha-Atsiloth (The World of Emanation)
« Ha-Briah (« « « Creation)
« Ha-Yetsirah (« « « Formation)
« Ha-'Asiyah (« « « Action)

The Universe was Created

The Kabbalists further teach that each of the three worlds Creation, Formation, and Action, is composed like the World of Emanation, and has Ten Sephīroth of its own. The farther the worlds are removed from the En-Soph, the less divine are the beings which evolved from them. For instance, the Pure Spirits which are of a higher category than the Angels belong to the World of Action, while the Angels inhabit the world below it. The less ethereal of comprehensible and material substance, including the K'lipoth (a name given to the Prince of Darkness and his hosts, literally meaning shells or refuse), belong to the lowermost decade of Sephīroth, the World of Action.

Now the question arises, since the Adam-Kadmon emanated from the En-Soph, how is it that He (the En-Soph) permitted the creation of the material world and the K'lipoth (Demons) in the Olam Ha-'Asiyah? The Kabbalists get over this difficulty by the theory of Tsimtsum (contraction or concentration), which explains that when the material world was about to be created the En-Soph was in a «tsimtsum» condition (*i. e.*, contracted himself): an explanation which is as difficult to understand as the original question. The promoter of this doctrine is Rabbi Mosheh ben Jacob Cordovero (1522–1570), the author of the famous Kabbalistic work 'Pardēs Rimmonim' (The Garden of Pomegranates).

Whether the present statement of the fundamental doctrines of the Ten Sephīroth was known or not prior to the tenth century A. D., cannot be positively stated. It appears, however, that the 'Sepher Yetsirah' (The Book of Creation) is the first book from which the author (or compiler) of the 'Zohar,' and subsequent commentators, have drawn their main information.

It is to be regretted that several important Kabbalistic works are attributed to fictitious authors. Tradition asserts that the author of the 'Sepher Yetsirah' is the Patriarch Abraham, and the author of the book called 'Sepher Raziel Hamalach' the First Adam. This, Kabbalists never doubted, yet scientific investigation demonstrated that neither the first nor the second was entitled to such antiquity. They belong to a much more recent period: the 'Sepher Yetsirah' to the Geônim period (after the fifth century A. D.); and the author of 'Raziel the Angel' is Rabbi Eliezer of Worms.

Another authority, called 'Sepher Habahir' (The Book of Brilliant Light), is attributed to Rabbi Nehunyah ben Hakanah (of the first century); but it has also been demonstrated (*cf.* Winter and Wünsche, 'Die Jüdische Literatur,' Vol. iii., 257) that this is a pseudonym, and its real author is Isaac "The Blind" of the eleventh century, or one of his disciples.

There are several Kabbalistic Midrashim (see Jellinek's 'Beth Ha-Midrash') supposed to be contemporaries with Midrash Rabbah and Tanhumah, etc.; but most of them have likewise been proven to be apocryphal. Considering these things, the student of the Kabbalah can do no better than to refer to authorities beginning with the twelfth century.

The book called 'Zohar' is ascribed to Rabbi Simeon, the son of Yohaï (Yochaï), who was contemporary with the famous Rabbi Akiba (second century A. D.). Modern critics, however, believe they have discovered some elements in the text which tend to prove that it is of a later date (*cf.* Ginzburg, 'The Kabbalah,' pp. 78–94), and attribute it to Rabbi Moses ben Shem Tob de Leon (born 1250, died 1305).

Notwithstanding those criticisms, the 'Zohar' continues to be the corner-stone upon which the whole structure of the Kabbalah rests. It is the fountain-head from which all modern Kabbalistic writers have drawn their material; and no true adherent to its doctrines has ever disputed its authorship. The most recent edition (Wilna: 1882), now before me, bears the same title as the first edition published by Da Padova and Jacob ben Naphtali (Mantua: 1558–1560). The title is as follows: 'Sēphĕr Ha-Zohar 'al Hamishah Humshē Torah mehatana ha-Elokē Rabbi Shimeon ben Yohaï' [Yochaï] (The Book of Zohar, [a Commentary] on the Pentateuch by the Tana, the Divine Rabbi Simeon ben Yohaï).

Whilst it cannot be denied that there are numerous additions and interpolations, probably whole treatises, in the 'Zohar' which might be ascribed to a later period than the second century of our era, it is nevertheless certain that the greater part of the work belongs to an early period. What Moses de Leon might have done (if he ever did anything) was to compile the *disjecta membra* of various Midrashim and add them to the Midrash Y'hi Ôr (the Exposition "Let there be Light," Gen. i. 3); thus changing Ôr (Light) into the more significant name Zohar (shining Light).

The 'Zohar,' like the Hebrew Pentateuch, is divided into fifty-two Parshioth (sections) and contains several treatises, which are for the most part a Kabbalistic exposition of the Pentateuch. One of the dissertations (Vols. ii. and iii.), called 'Ra'āya Mehemna' (the Faithful Shepherd), contains the discussions of Moses (the Faithful Shepherd), the prophet Elijah, and Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai. Another treatise, the 'Book of Secrets,' discusses Demonology, Psychology, Metempsychosis, and kindred subjects.

HERMENEUTICAL RULES OF THE KABBALAH

WE HAVE space only to explain a few of the more important rules so frequently used in the Kabbalistic interpretation of the Scriptures. The most important exegetical rule in the Kabbalah is called Gematria (formed by metathesis from the Greek γραμματεία), according to which every Hebrew letter has a numerical value. There are in the Hebrew alphabet, including the finals, twenty-seven characters, which are divided into nine groups of threes. The first letters of each group from right to left are the units from 1 to 9; the second represent the tens from 10 to 90; the third represent the hundreds, from 100 to 900. This arrangement of the 27 letters in nine groups is called the AIK BKR (the Ayak Bekhar) alphabet, being the six letters contained in the first two chambers of the diagram.

ג G . . Num. val. 3	ב B . . Num. val. 2	א A . . Num. val. 1
ל L . . " 30	כ K . . " 20	י I (Y). " 10
שׁ Sh . . " 300	ר R . . " 200	ק Ḳ . . " 100
ו V . . " 6	ה H . . " 5	ד D . . " 4
ס Ṣ . . " 60	נ N . . " 50	מ M . . " 40
ם M (final) " 600	ך Kh (final) " 500	ת T . . " 400
ט Ṭ . . " 9	ח Ḥ . . " 8	ז Z . . " 7
צ Ts . . " 90	פ P . . " 80	ע ('A) . " 70
ץ Ts (final) " 900	ף Ph (final) " 800	ן N (final) " 700

By this ingenious but illogical mode many Hebrew verses, words, or letters are computed and compared with other verses, words, or letters; and if their numerical value happens to correspond, which not infrequently happens, their affinity is held to be established. For example, the numerical value of the three Hebrew letters forming the word $\underset{9}{T}\ \underset{6}{V}\ \underset{2}{B}$ (Tobh), «good,» amounts to 9+6+2=17; reduce 17 to its component figures thus: 1+7=8; then compare this reduced number with the numerical equivalent of the Tetragrammaton $\underset{10}{I}\ \underset{5}{H}\ \underset{6}{V}\ \underset{5}{H}$ 10+5+6+5=26; reduce 26 into its component parts thus: 2+6=8: ergo, it is plain, to the Kabbalist, that whenever the word Tobh (good) occurs in the Scriptures the Deity is meant (I H V H — Jehovah).

Some of these deductions are very interesting. See for instance the exposition of Exodus ii. 2, in the 'Zohar,' ii. 11*b*. When Moses was born, it is said: «And she [the mother] saw him that he was a goodly [literally, good] child.» Rabbi Jose said that «the mother beheld the light of the Shekhinah shining within him»; and according to both the Talmud and the Midrash, «the house was filled with Ôr [light].» It was by this same method that the author of the Kabbalistic work 'Shelah'* discovered that the reduced number of the letters composing the Hebrew En-Soph (Infinite) amounts to 207=9 precisely the same as that of Ôr (Light) and of Adon 'Olam (the Lord of the Universe).

When one considers these exhaustless means of interpretation at the disposal of the Kabbalists, it is not in the least surprising that they could twist and interpret any text of Scripture to suit their own purposes.

Another rule which the Kabbalists often employ is the *Notarikôn*. According to this the initials or finals of a whole phrase make one word, and *vice versa;* for instance, *war* — *W*e *A*re *R*uined.

It is narrated of a certain Rabbi Abner (of the fifteenth century), a skeptic and disbeliever in the symbolic interpretation of the Scriptures, that disputing with a Kabbalist who maintained that by means of the exegetical rules of the Kabbalah one could trace the past, present, and future of men from the beginning to the end of the world, he challenged his opponent to indicate the verse in the 'Torah' wherein his own name and fortune occurred. The Kabbalist pointed out Deuteronomy xxxii. 26, where we read: AMa*R*TI APh*A*Hem ASh*B*ITHa M'A*N*OSh ZiKh*R*aM («I said . . . I would make the remembrance of them to cease among men»). «Your name and fortune,» said the Kabbalist, «are indicated in the third consonant of each of the five words — R(abbi) Abn(e)r.» What impression this argument made on Rabbi Abner is not stated; but the story is often quoted by the Kabbalists as a convincing proof that every letter, yea, each scintilla, has some secret meaning understood by the «qualified,» but unknown and invisible to the profane and uninitiated.

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*SHeLaH is the abbreviated form composed of the initials of the Hebrew words Sh'nē Lûhoth Haberith,— the two tables of the Covenant.

Besides these inexhaustible means, there are several additional rules; so that if the point in dispute cannot be settled by any one of the above-named rules, others may be brought forward. Thus, if the Gematria and Notarikôn should fail to produce the desired effect, the Temurah (Permutation) is resorted to, by which means each and every one of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet may be substituted for another. There are about twenty-eight alphabets of that category. The At-Bash alphabet — formed by pairing the first Hebrew letter, Aleph (A), with the last, Tau (T); the second letter, Beth (B), with the last but one, Shin (Sh); etc. — is the most frequently used. By this canon the Aleph (A) can assume the character of Tau (T), and *vice versa*, Beth (B) the character of Shin (Sh), etc., as here shown (read from right to left): —

THE AT-BASH ALPHABET

את	בש	גר	דק	הצ	ופ	זע	חס	טנ	ימ	כל
TA	ShB	RG	ḲD	TsH	PV or W	'AZ	ṢḤ	NṬ	MI or Y	LK

Permutation of letters seems to have been in practice centuries before our present era. We meet traces of its use as early as the time of Jeremiah, when (Jerem. xxv. 26) *B*a*B*e*L* (Babylon) is called *S*he*S*ha*K*. Now if the letters BBL are placed above SSK, we see that Jeremiah made use of the At-Bash alphabet. If this were the only instance, we might call it an accident; but there is another example (ibid., li. 1), where the Chaldeans (Hebrew KaSDIM) are called L'BKaMI, by the same permutation process of the At-Bash alphabet.

Considering the number of their alphabets, we understand how easy it is for the Kabbalist to predict anything and everything. But copious and all-sufficient as this system would seem to be, the Kabbalists have yet another resource: by this last, the alphabet is divided into three sections forming triads composed of three letters, and the letters of the same triad (see diagram, page 8435) are interchanged one with the other.

THE PRACTICAL KABBALAH

The 'Practical Kabbalah' is the immediate outcome of — first, hermeneutical interpretation of Scripture; second, the use for practical purposes of the Shem-Hamphorash (the unutterable name of God — IHVH) and his numerous attributes; third, the introduction of heterogeneous elements proceeding from heathen sources and alchemist enthusiasts; and fourth, the persecution of the Jews in the Middle Ages.

It was then that the esoteric theosophy (hitherto exclusively in the hands of the Jewish «elect») became public property. This publicity was owing to the internecine contention among the ranks of the Spanish Hebrew philosophers of the thirteenth century, which caused a split in the synagogue. The war was carried on between the two factions. One, the most intellectual, was championed by the famous Maimonides (1235-1304); who did not renounce the philosophical bearing of the Sephīroth, but was opposed to the mystical interpretation of Scripture by the successors of Rabbi Isaac the Blind. The other, the most numerous and influential faction, had for their champion the youthful but famous Kabbalist Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, called Nachmoni or Nachmonides.

Maimonides was denounced by his opponents as a heretic; and the hatred which kept smoldering among them was fanned into an open conflagration, which compelled the Gentile world also to inquire into the subject.

The persecution and forced conversions of the Jews have also contributed to the publicity of the Hebrew esoteric philosophy. Many of the learned Rabbis embraced the Christian faith, and the principal books were translated into Latin. Christian philosophers embraced the Kabbalah as a godsend. At first they were somewhat hampered by the doctrine of «Three Trinities»; but since the doctrine of three is the basis of the Sephīroth, and since it deals also with «Father» and «Mother,» the Makroprosorpon (Great Face), the Mikroprosorpon (Small Face), the «Infinite,» etc.,—they overlooked the impediments and accepted the essential points.

This foreign doctrine found additional friends among the «practical» scientists of that age, and it enrolled among its admirers men of great learning,—physicians, metaphysicians, alchemists, mathematicians, etc.,—as the learned works of that period (1300-1700) testify; from the famous scholastic Raymond Lully, who died 1315, to the most eminent Christian scholar Baron C. Knorr von Rosenroth, of the seventeenth century.

Whilst the Kabbalah was making rapid strides in these new quarters, and absorbed in its progress not a few of the heterogeneous doctrines entirely foreign to the Sephiritic system, it did not remain idle in its former abode. The check it received from Maimonides's followers was counteracted by the formidable array of Nachmonides and his disciples. The number of «elect» and «saints» multiplied, and the ‹Zohar› came to be considered as a Holy Book on the same level with the ‹Torah.› The Gentile Kabbalists who engaged in the Practical Kabbalah were ignored by the Hebrew «elect.» The Rabbis declared that their «wonder-workings» were accomplished by means of the Shem Hamphorash (the ineffable name of God), his attributes, and the Angels, whilst the Gentiles performed them by means of Satan and his hosts.

The principal Hebrew colleges for the study of the Kabbalah were located in Spain; but after the expulsion of the Jews (1492) from that country, various schools were opened in France, Germany, and Palestine.

Whilst the Gentile alchemists endeavored to discover the philosopher's stone by means of the 'Practical Kabbalah,' the Rabbis, on the other hand, by help of the all-powerful Prophet Elijah, tried to obtain saintly virtues, in order to become the possessors of the Divine teachings (Grace); and there were not a few who even attempted the liberation of the Jews from their captivity by means of the Shem Hamphorash, and even assumed the title of «Messiah.» Abraham Abulafia in the thirteenth century, born in Zaragosa, and the famous Sabbathai Zebhi in the seventeenth century, born in Smyrna, are examples of those who tried it, but who failed miserably. It was not long before the latter pseudo-Messiah proclaimed himself King of the Jews. Plans to march on Constantinople and subdue the Gentiles—of course not by the sword, but by miraculous deeds—were laid. The globe was portioned out among his immediate disciples and relatives, reserving for his own dominion the Holy Land, with Jerusalem for his own residence. The day for the capture of Constantinople was already appointed. But the unusual multitude which gathered around him attracted the attention of the authorities, and the intended uprising was quelled in its inception. Sabbathai Zebhi and his disciples were cast in prison. His adherents still confided in him, and waited for Divine intervention when the gates of the prison should open. This drama ended in the total discomfiture of the pseudo-Messiah and his followers. Sabbathai Zebhi embraced the Moslem faith, and died in prison. In his belief he was a follower of Isaac Loria's Kabbalistic doctrines, and considered himself able to perform miracles; his right-hand disciple was Nathan of Gaza, who assumed the title of «Prophet.» The fame of Sabbathai Zebhi spread among the Jews in all parts of the world, and he proclaimed himself to be the long-expected Messiah. Deputations were sent from various centres of Hebrew learning to ascertain the truth as to his claims of the Messiahship. The deluded Kabbalist had succeeded in convincing some of them that certain Messianic passages in the Scriptures (by means of the above-named *Gematria*, Notarikôn, etc.) point directly to himself. For instance, the three Hebrew consonants S B T, forming the word ShēBheT (sceptre), mentioned in Balaam's prophecy, «There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre (ShēBheT) shall rise out of Israel» (Numbers xxiv. 17), amount to the number 5, the same as the Hebrew letters of his own name; a slender foundation for the Messiahship.

Notwithstanding the efforts of those modern occultists who attempt to infuse new life into the ‘Practical Kabbalah’ by means of heterogeneous materials, it is, like sorcery, doomed to become a thing of the past. As a matter of fact, its incantations, charms, and exorcisms are nothing more than sorcery. There are numerous books on this subject, some of them written by eminent Kabbalists. One of the most curious of these is the production of Rabbi Israel Baalshem, called ‘Miph'aloth Elohim’ or ‘Elokim’ (Workings of the Almighty). This book is the storehouse of Kabbalistic therapeutics, and among the numerous recipes are directions how to expel unfamiliar spirits from the possessed by means of exorcisms and charms; how to draw wine from the wall, how to create wine, etc. The *vade mecum* of the modern Baalshem is the book called ‘Shimûsh Tehilim,’ which teaches how to cure all diseases, put out fires, become a favorite, conquer enemies, counteract an evil eye, discover hidden treasure, etc., by means of certain Psalms. Each Psalm, yea, verse or word, is asserted to contain the name or attributes of God and the Heavenly Hosts. The injunctions to the postulants are of the most severe nature. A worldly man, even if he chances to learn the doctrinal part of the theosophy, can penetrate no further. The Keeper of those secrets is Elijah the Prophet, who will never permit the ungodly to acquire them. Not only is the unworthy student threatened with dire punishment, but the betrayer of the Divine secrets must meet the same fate.

The Kabbalists believe that Moses acquired these heavenly secrets, the Shem 'A B (Seventy-two Name), at the «burning bush.» Whosoever utters the holy name of the «Seventy-two,» the Kabbalists declare, «will surely die.» The name of the «Seventy-two» proceeds from the Hebrew letters of the verses in Exodus xiv. 19–21, beginning with Vayis'a, Vayabho, Vayēt. These verses speak of the doings of the «Angel of the Lord» and Moses at the Red Sea. Each verse has seventy-two letters, and is by the Kabbalists written in three lines; the first from right to left, the second from left to right, and the third again from right to left. The verses, placed horizontally and in juxtaposition so as to correspond exactly letter for letter, if vertically divided form seventy-two triads of letters; each triad is supposed to represent one of the attributes of the Deity, and to possess a recondite meaning.

The Prophet Elijah never tasted death (2 Kings ii. 11). He is, according to the Kabbalists, a ubiquitous personage engaged in the same mission now as when he was on earth. This assertion they base on quasi-Scriptural authority, as in Malachi iv. 5-6: «Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.» Many stories of his exploits are related in the 'Talmud,' the 'Midrash,' and the 'Zohar': how he relieves the needy and suffering, chastises the godless, etc. But his main mission is to assist the ascetic saints when they are engaged in the study of the Divine secrets.

Not only the Hasidim sect, but even many orthodox Hebrews, repeat every Saturday evening songs and hymns wherein are cited the deeds of Elijah, as related in the Bible and tradition. Saturday evening is specially a propitious time for those who keep the Sabbath holy; for Elijah sits then under the Ets Hayim (Tree of Life), and records the good deeds of the pious. Elijah's name is then repeated one hundred and thirty times. The five Hebrew letters in «Elijah» are transposed one hundred and twenty times, in the following manner:—

ELIAH (Elijah), ELIHA, ELHIA, ELHAI,
ELAHI, ELAIH, EILHA, EILAH, EIHLA,
EIHAL, EIAHL, EIALH, Etc., Etc.,

corresponding to the numerical value of the Hebrew letters composing «Eliahu Hanabhi» (Elijah the Prophet): 1+30+10+5+6+5+50+2+10+1=120. In addition to these 120 transpositions they repeat ten times the regular untransposed name of ELIAH (Elijah), making the total 130. Those who are unable to pronounce these difficult transpositions repeat 130 times «Elijah the Prophet, Elijah the Prophet,» etc. This points to the Hebrew word KaL=130 (Swift), and hints also at 'AB=72 (Cloud); both words are mentioned in Isaiah xix. 1: «Behold the Lord rideth upon a 'Swift' (KaL, 130) 'Cloud'» ('AB, 72).

Among those who chiefly distinguished themselves (since 1550) and who are designated by the title Elohe or Eloke (Divine), and could perform miracles, are Moses ben Jacob Cordovero (1522-1570), author of the Kabbalistic work 'Pardes Rimonim' (The Garden of Pomegranates); Jesaiah Horwitz (1570-1630), author of the 'ShLaH'; Isaac Loria, author of 'Ets Häïm' (Tree of Life), and 'Sepher Haguilgulim' (Metempsychosis); and his disciple Haim Vital (Vidal), and Israel Baal Shem, born in 1750, at Medziborze, Poland.

The number of the Hebrew books and commentaries on the Kabbalah amounts to thousands. The following are the most important and accessible:—

The 'Talmud,' Tract. Chagigeh (Haguigah), Chap. ii., fols. 11-16.

The 'Zohar,' attributed to Rabbi Simeon ben Yohaï. First edition, Cremona and Mantua, 1560. (There are numerous later editions.)

‘Sepher Tikûne Ha-Zohar’ (attributed to the same). Leghorn, 1842.

‘Sepher Yetsireh’ (The Book of Creation), with ten Commentaries. Warsaw, 1884.

‘Sepher Habahir’ (The Book of Brilliant Light). Amsterdam, 1651. (There are several editions.)

‘Pardes Rimônim’ (The Garden of Pomegranates), by Rabbi Moses Cordovero.

‘Sha’arē Ôrah’ (Gates of Light), by Joseph ben Abraham Gikatilia. (There is a Latin translation by P. Ricius, 1516.)

‘Ets Hayim’ (The Tree of Life), compiled by Hayim (Chayim) ben Joseph Vital (Vidal). Korzec, 1784.

‘Sh’nē Lūhoth Habrith’ (The Two Tables of the Covenant), by Jesaiah Horwitz.

‘Beth Ha-Midrasch,’ a collection of apocryphal midrashim, mostly treating of Jewish folk-lore and Kabbalah; compiled and translated by Adolph Jellinek. Leipzig, 1853–55.

‘Guinzē Hakhmath Hakaballah: Auswahl Kabbalistischer Mystik’ (A Selection of Kabbalist Mystic). Jellinek, Leipzig, 1853.

‘Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala’ (Contributions toward the History of Kabbalah). Jellinek, Leipzig, 1852.

‘Kabbalah Denudata’ (Latin). By Baron C. Knorr von Rosenroth. Sulzbach, 1677. English translation, with Preface by S. L. MacGregor Mathews. London, 1887.

‘The Kabbalah, An Essay,’ by C. D. Ginzburg, 1865.

‘Kabbalah’ in ‘Encyclopædia Britannica,’ Ninth Ed., by C. D. Ginzburg.

‘La Kabbale, ou la Philosophie Réligieuse des Hebreux,’ by Adolphe Frank (new ed.). Paris, 1889.

‘Midrash Hazohar: Die Religionsphilosophie des Zohar: Eine Kritische Beleuchtung der Frank’schen «Kabbala»’ (The Religious Philosophy of the ‘Zohar’: A Critical Examination of Frank’s ‘Kabbalah’). (By) Joel (D. H.), Leipzig, 1849.

‘Le Livre des Splendeurs’ (The Book of Splendors), by Eliphaz Lévi, Paris, 1894.

‘Geschichte der Juden’ (History of the Jews), Graetz, Vol. viii., pp. 96–98, 219–221, 242.

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THE KALEVALA

BY WILLIAM SHARP

The great Finnish epic, the ‘Kalevala,’ is in a sense the most significant national epic in existence. In it are reflected not only the manners, beliefs, superstitions, and customs of a race, but the very soul of that race. The Finnish pulse beats in the ‘Kalevala,’ the Finnish heart stirs throughout its rhythmic sequences, the Finnish brain molds and adapts itself within these metrical limits. There is, too, certainly no other instance so remarkable of the influence upon the national character of an epic work which as it were summarizes the people for itself. In no exaggerated sense, the Finland of to-day is largely due to the immense influence of the national sentiment created by the universal adoption of the ‘Kalevala’ as, after the Scriptures, the chief mental and spiritual treasure-house of the Finnish nation.

The word “epic” is frequently used too loosely; as for example when applied to the ‘Ossian’ of Macpherson. In the sense of continuity alone can the word “epic” properly be used; whereas great epical works such as the ‘Kalevala’ are really aggregations of epic matter welded into a certain homogeneity, but rather by the accident of common interest, and by the indomitable skill of one or more sagamen, than by any inherent necessity of controlled and yet inevitable sequent relation. When therefore one sees the ‘Kalevala’ referred to — as recently in the instance of a critic of some standing — as an epic comparable with those of Milton or Dante, one must at once discount a really irrelevant comparison. For though both Dante and Milton, and doubtless Homer in his half-mythic time, summed up an infinitude of general knowledge and thought, their actual achievement stands to this day as individual and distinctive. But though we owe the ‘Kalevala’ as we know it to the genius of one man, — Elias Lönnrot of Helsingfors, — this man was the editor rather than the creator of the national epic. For the famous national epic of Finland is in reality composed of a great number of popular songs, ballads, incantations, and early runic poetry, strung together into an artistic whole by the genius of Dr. Lönnrot.

The Finns were gradually dying out as a nation before the ‘Kalevala’ appeared. National hopes, aspirations, and ideals had long been slowly atrophying; and in another generation or two Russia would have absorbed all the intellectual life of the old Northern realm, and Finland have sunk to the status of a mere outlying province. At the same time the Finns have ever been a people of marked racial homogeneity, and have cherished their ancient language and literature with something of that passionate attachment which we find in all races whose heroic past dominates a present which in no respect can be compared with it. The upper classes would inevitably have become Swedish or Russian, and the majority of the people would in time have degenerated into a listless and mentally inert mass. Perhaps a great war, involving a national uprising, would have saved them from this slow death: but happily the genius of one man and the enthusiasm of contemporary and subsequent colleagues obviated any such tragically crucial test; for by applying the needed torch to the national enthusiasm, Lönnrot and his fellow-workers gave incalculable stimulus to the mental and actual life of their countrymen.

For many ages the Finnish minstrels, who had ever been beloved of the people, went to and fro reciting the old sagas of the race, singing old national songs and telling the wonderful folk-tales of a remote and ancient land. These singers were known as the Runolainen, and played to the sound of the *kantela*, a kind of harp much like that which the Gaelic minstrels used to carry in their similar wanderings to and fro from village to village and from house to house. For generation after generation, much of the essential part of the 'Kalevala,' as we now know it, lived within the hearts and upon the lips of the peasants and farming classes: but with the changed conditions which came to the whole of Europe early in the present century, and with the political and other vicissitudes through which Finland in common with almost every other country has passed, it was inevitable that as elsewhere, this oral legendary lore should slowly fade before the pressing actualities of new and radically distinct conditions.

The first man to make a systematic endeavor to stem the ebb of the national poetry and sentiment was Dr. Zacharias Topelius, who in 1822 published a small collection of Finnish folk poetry and legends. But fifteen years later Dr. Elias Lönnrot achieved that marvelous success which has been the admiration and wonder of Europe ever since, as well as the delight — and in a sense, as already indicated, the regeneration — of Finland itself.

Dr. Lönnrot, inspired with a passionate enthusiasm for the historical language and legendary literature of his people, set himself the task of rescuing all that was best in the vast unprinted and uncollected mass of folk-lore which existed in his country. To this end he lived with the peasantry for many years and wandered from place to place, everywhere taking down from the lips of the people all that they knew of their popular songs or legendary lore, and including of course all they could tell him of local superstitions, incantations, and so forth. At first his researches were limited to the district of Karelia, in the Government of Kupio. Even within this limited scope he obtained, besides numerous fragmentary songs and a great number of proverbs and charms, a complete epos consisting of some 12,000 lines. These either fell naturally, or were arranged by him, in thirty-two parts, each consisting of from 200 to 700 verses. They were given to the world just as he had heard them sung or chanted; and in this, of course, lies their primary value. At the first, however, this all-important work attracted little attention when it was published in 1835—and this notwithstanding the fact that it appeared under the title of 'Kalevala' (Kalewala), the ancient poetic designation of Finland. Five years later the Academy of Dorpat made the publication the subject of discussion at their meetings. Some nine years subsequently Dr. Lönnrot issued a new edition of nearly 23,000 verses in fifty so-called runes. But already the attention of scientific Europe had been drawn to this wonderful Finnish find. Not only the Swede and famous Finnish scholar Castrén, but the great German philologists, the two Grimms and Brockhaus, agreed in regarding the 'Kalevala' as a genuine epic; and as an epic it has ever since been received—although, as already hinted, a splendid epical national mirror rather than epic in the strict literary sense of the term. It would be pedantic, however, to refuse the term «epic» to the 'Kalevala,' for all that it does not conform to certain literary conditions which we associate with the epic pure and simple. Not only, from the date of the first discussions at Dorpat down to the present time, has the 'Kalevala' been admitted to be one of the most curious monuments of its kind posessed by any European people, but the chief authorities have agreed in regarding it as a composition possessing an almost unparalleled wealth of images and tropes, great flexibility of rhythm, and a copiousness of synonyms not to be met with in any other Northern tongue. Of course there is great divergence of opinion as to the identification of historic facts and arbitrary figments; that is, as to whether the incidents of the narrative refer to definite historical epochs, or are mainly mythical or allegorical. It is too loose a way of writing to aver, with one authority on the subject, that the date of its composition must be referred to a period anterior to the introduction of Christianity among the Finns in the fourteenth century; for while there is internal evidence to an even more ancient origin than this,—indeed, of an identity of names and traditions which points to an epoch anterior to the immigrations of the Karelin Finns into the districts which they now occupy,—not enough allowance is made for the arbitrary archaic coloring which by a natural law characterizes all renascent folk-lore. It does not follow, because a narrative is remote in date and is archaic in form, that it belongs to a remote date itself; though the conditions and circumstances which preserve traditionary folk-lore are pre-eminently conservative. Students of all early and mainly traditional literatures have long agreed upon this point, and one of the first efforts of the philological folklorist is to penetrate the illusion of an arbitrary archaism.

Once the importance of this great indigenous epic of Finland was fully recognized, translations from Dr. Lönnrot's invaluable version appeared in Swedish, German, and French,—and latterly in English, with which may be included the few representative selections translated by the late Professor Porter of Yale College (published in New York, 1868). The 'Kalevala' is written in eight-syllabled trochaic verse, and an adequate idea of its style and method may be obtained from the popular 'Hiawatha' of Longfellow; who, it may be added, adopted this particular metrical form from his knowledge of the great Finnish poem. Some eight or nine years ago a complete edition of the 'Kalevala' appeared in English, the work of Mr. John Martin Crawford (2 vols., 1888). In the interesting preface to this work—which deals with the Finns and their country, and also with their language and mythology—the translator remarks, what the famous Grimm had already affirmed, that the 'Kalevala' describes Finnish life and nature with extraordinary minuteness, verisimilitude, and beauty; and that indeed no national poem is to be compared with it in this respect, unless it be some of the epics of India. He adds also some interesting additional evidence for the genuineness of certain of the more archaic portions, which have been disputed by some critics. For, as he says, some of the most convincing evidences of the genuineness and great age of the 'Kalevala' have been supplied by Barna, the Hungarian translator. The Hungarians, it is well known, are racially closely connected with the Finns; and their language, the Magyar, has the same characteristics as the Finnish tongue. Naturally therefore Barna's translation might well be, as it admittedly is, much the finest rendering of the original. (In a book written by a Hungarian in 1578 are collected all the incantations in use among Hungarian country-people of his day for the expulsion of disease and misfortunes. These display a most satisfactory sameness with the numerous incantations in the 'Kalevala' used for the same purpose.)

The 'Kalevala' (whose direct significance is «the land of heroes») relates as its main theme the ever-varying contests between the Finns and a people referred to in the epic as «the darksome Lapps,» just as the Iliad relates the contests between the Greeks and the Trojans. It is more than probable, however, that these Laplanders are not exactly the Lapps of to-day; and it is possible that another interpretation of the 'Kalevala' points to a contest between Light and Darkness, Good and Evil,— the Finns representing the Light and Good, and the Lapps the Darkness and Evil. The celebrated Swedish scholar Castrén is of opinion that the enmity between the Finns and the Lapps was sown long before the Finns had left their Asiatic birthplace. Certainly this possibility is enhanced — collaterally affording another proof of the great antiquity of the fundamental part of the 'Kalevala'— by the silence throughout concerning the neighboring Russians, Swedes, and Germans. Nowhere in the poem are there any important signs of foreign influence; indeed, from first to last it is a true pagan epic, and some of the narrative portions — for example the story of Mariatta recited in the fiftieth rune — are pre-Christian.

It has been well said of the architecture of the 'Kalevala,' that it stands midway between the epic ballads of the Servians and the purely epical structure of the Iliad: for although now accepted as a continuous whole, it contains several almost independent parts; as for example the contest of the Yonkahainen, the Kullervo episode, and the legend of Mariatta. To this day its eight-syllabled trochaic verse, with the part line echo, is the characteristic literary expression of the Finnish people. It is this which gives peculiar value to Mr. Crawford's translation, to which allusion has already been made; for it is in the original metre,— a wonderfully versatile metre, he adds, which admits of keeping the right medium between the dignified and virile hexameter and the quieter metres of the lyrics. Its feet are nimble and fleet, yet are full of vigor and expressiveness; while in addition the 'Kalevala' uses alliteration, and thus varies the rhythm of time with the rhythm of sound. While therefore all honor is given to Dr. Lönnrot, it must not be forgotten that the substance of the 'Kalevala' existed before he wandered minstrel-wise from village to village; that, in a word, it has descended unwritten from the mythical age to the present day, kept alive from generation to generation, and in this sense is the veritable expression of the national life. We must remember the national idiosyncrasy in judging the monotonous effect of this great epic. For what is congenial to the Finns is not so to us, who have something of the Celtic love of variety and vivacity. For this epic of fifty books, written throughout in the 'Hiawatha' metre, seldom relieves the ear by a pause or a final long syllable, but is one uninterrupted stream of trochees, which have in prolonged perusal a wearisome effect to our ears. Strangely enough, we find at least one Southern people with the same characteristic; for the metre of the dialogues in the plays of Calderon and other Spanish masters is akin.

A great many theories have arisen as to the origin and full significance of the 'Kalevala,' but these may be merely alluded to *en passant*. In the words of Mr. Oxenford: "To admit any conjecture as to the veritable import of the 'Kalevala'—as to the nucleus of truth, moral, historical, or theological, that would remain if it were stripped of its wild fancies—would be an act of presumption, as the profoundest investigators of the subject are still in darkness." There are certain features, however, which may be pointed out; and these we have already indicated. All authorities agree on one point: that the surprising development of the Finns during the present century is to a large extent due to the fostering efforts of the Finnish Literary Society (itself an outcome of the labors of Dr. Lönnrot and other pioneers), and the collection of those marvelous stores of folk-lore which have so long lain half buried under the austere reserve of the Finnish peasant. The critics, moreover,—native, Swedish, Russian, German, and English,—all concur in recognition of the 'Kalevala's' immense importance in this political and national development. With the best fitted to judge of these, we may agree in saying that the 'Kalevala' has stirred the fibre of nationality among a people who have never yet shown any political genius; that it has revealed to an obscure race their own unity and power; that it has awakened an enthusiasm for national culture and historic life which appears destined to have far-reaching effects.

Some idea of the immense extent of contemporary research may be gained from the fact that by the year 1889 the Finnish Society had already collected

22,000	songs,
13,000	stories,
40,000	proverbs,
10,000	riddles,
2,000	folk melodies, and
20,000	incantations, games, etc.

The main body and frame of the 'Kalevala' is compounded of four cycles of folk-songs. The poem itself takes its name from three heroes of ancient Kalevala; namely, Wåinåmöinen, Ilmarinen, and Lemminkåinen. It is the struggles of these with the mythical "darksome Laplanders" or others, out of Pohjola, a land of the cold north, and from Luomela, the land of death, that constitute the theme of the epic narrative. The poem, which begins at the creation of the world, ends at last in the triumph of Wåinåmöinen and his comrades. Besides the four divisional cycles just alluded to, there are seven distinct romances or folk-tales woven into the general fabric; namely, 'The Tale of Aino,' 'The Fishing for the Mermaid,' 'The Wooing of the Daughter of the Air,' 'The Golden Bride,' 'The Wooing of the Son of Kojo,' 'The Captivity and Deliverance of the Sun and Moon,' and 'The Story of the Virgin Maria.' Besides these, and scattered freely throughout the work,—sometimes placed in the mouths of the characters, sometimes absorbed into the narrative itself,—are many prayers, chants, religious formulas, and other magic songs and lyrics, roughly divisible thus: (1) origins; (2) charms; (3) lyrics; (4) marriage songs; (5) the origin of the harp; (6) introductory and closing songs. Finally, there seem to be additions apparently composed, paraphrased, or adopted by Dr. Lönnrot himself; though it is uncertain if these are not merely later and perhaps contemporary additions to the national treasures of folk-lore.

No one who has ever visited Finland can fail to note the truth of the delineation of the national genius as reflected in this representative work: truth of observation, love of nature, mental independency, unmistakable racial idiosyncrasy. Something of the spirit of that vast and for the most part strangely bleak and desolate country has saturated the 'Kalevala.' The immense plains, the great treeless pastures, the lakes like inland seas, the trackless gloomy pine forests, have together thrown something of their shadow across the national epic: and in it we hear—almost as distinctly as the voices of men and women and the sharp antagonism of rival forces bodily or spiritual—the lone cry of the wind, the dashing of solitary seas, and the solitary cry of the wild swan along unfrequented lakes. This characteristic melancholy is to be found not only in the ancient poems, but in the writings of contemporary Finnish poets; and we may take it that that Finnish legend is true in spirit which displays the genius of Finland as a wild swan, singing a death-song beautifully, while, bewildered by the slow increasing mists of death, it circles blindly above the forests and lakes and vast snow plains of the great Northland. If the 'Kalevala' be indeed the swan-song of the Finns, we must admit that it has at least the note rather of virility and endurance than of undue melancholy or decrepitude.

Fortunately, it is no longer considered boorish in Finland to speak the ancient Finnish tongue. For a time the Russian government did its utmost to encourage the cultivation of Finnish in every direction; but this, it is to be feared, was not so much from disinterested love of an ancient language and its literature as the desire to alienate the people from the language and general sympathies of the Swedes, under whose dominion Finland formerly was. Latterly, Russia has broken its solemn pledges and done its utmost to Russianize Finland. It needs all the enthusiasm and native independence of the Finns to resist the organized assault made against them from school and church and the public courts; but at present, at any rate, the national patriotism is likely to prove a stronger factor than Russian bureaucratism. The Finnish literary movement inspired by the ‘Kalevala’ has as yet achieved very little; but if not stamped out by Russian influence, it is possible that it may have a marked development before long. Many of the younger Finns display remarkable promise, though they have to face the fact that the people who will read the native language are mostly of a class who can ill afford to buy books. Moreover, the prose literature of Finland has ever been almost exclusively devoted to religious and moral subjects; and it seems as though the mental soil were not yet ready to bear a harvest akin to that remarkable aftermath which is so noticeable a feature of the contemporary intellectual development of Sweden, and still more of Norway.

We may take leave of the ‘Kalevala’ in the words of one of the most popular writers on kindred subjects, Mr. Max Müller:—

> «From the mouths of the aged an epic poem has been collected, equaling the Iliad in length and completeness; nay,—if we can forget for a moment all that we in our youth learned to call beautiful,—not less beautiful. A Finn is not a Greek, and a Wainamoinen was not a Homer. But if the poet may take his colors from that nature by which he is surrounded, if he may depict the men with whom he lives, the ‘Kalevala’ possesses merits not dissimilar from those of the Iliad: and will claim its place as the fifth national epic of the world, side by side with the ‘Ionian Songs,’ with the ‘Mahābhārata,’ the ‘Shahnāmeh,’ and the ‘Nibelungen.’»

As exemplifying the style and method of the ‘Kalevala,’ I may give the opening and closing lines in the translation of Mr. Crawford, as that more adequately conveys a notion of the original than any other save that of the Hungarian, Barna.

PROEM

MASTERED by desire impulsive,
By a mighty inward urging,
I am ready now for singing,
Ready to begin the chanting
Of our nation's ancient folk-song,
Handed down from bygone ages.
In my mouth the words are melting,
From my lips the tones are gliding,
From my tongue they wish to hasten;
When my willing teeth are parted,
When my ready mouth is opened,
Songs of ancient wit and wisdom
Hasten from me not unwilling.

Golden friend, and dearest brother,
Brother dear of mine in childhood,
Come and sing with me the stories,
Come and chant with me the legends,
Legends of the times forgotten,
Since we now are here together,
Come together from our roamings.
Seldom do we come for singing,
Seldom to the one, the other,
O'er this cold and cruel country,
O'er the poor soil of the Northland.
Let us clasp our hands together
That we thus may best remember.
Join we now in merry singing,
Chant we now the oldest folk-lore,
That the dear ones all may hear them,
That the well-inclined may hear them,
Of this rising generation.
These are words in childhood taught me,
Songs preserved from distant ages;
Legends they that once were taken
From the belt of Wainamoinen,
From the forge of Ilmarinen,
From the sword of Kaukomieli,
From the bow of Youkahainen,
From the pastures of the Northland,
From the meads of Kalevala.
These my dear old father sang me
When at work with knife and hatchet;
These my tender mother taught me
When she twirled the flying spindle,
When a child upon the matting
By her feet I rolled and tumbled.
Incantations were not wanting
Over Sampo and o'er Louhi,
Sampo growing old in singing,
Louhi ceasing her enchantment.
In the songs died wise Wipunen,
At the games died Lemminkainen.
There are many other legends,
Incantations that were taught me,
That I found along the wayside,
Gathered in the fragrant copses,
Blown me from the forest branches,

Culled among the plumes of pine-trees,
Scented from the vines and flowers,
Whispered to me as I followed
Flocks in land of honeyed meadows,
Over hillocks green and golden,
After sable-haired Murikki,
And the many-colored Kimmo.
Many runes the cold has told me,
Many lays the rain has brought me,
Other songs the winds have sung me;
Many birds from many forests,
Oft have sung me lays in concord;
Waves of sea, and ocean billows,
Music from the many waters,
Music from the whole creation,
Oft have been my guide and master.
Sentences the trees created,
Rolled together into bundles,
Moved them to my ancient dwelling,
On the sledges to my cottage,
Tied them to my garret rafters,
Hung them on my dwelling-portals,
Laid them in a chest of boxes,
Boxes lined with shining copper.
Long they lay within my dwelling
Through the chilling winds of winter,
In my dwelling-place for ages.
  Shall I bring these songs together?
From the cold and frost collect them?
Shall I bring this nest of boxes,
Keepers of these golden legends,
To the table in my cabin,
Underneath the painted rafters,
In this house renowned and ancient?
Shall I now these boxes open,
Boxes filled with wondrous stories?
Shall I now the end unfasten
Of this ball of ancient wisdom?
These ancestral lays unravel?
Let me sing an old-time legend,
That shall echo forth the praises
Of the beer that I have tasted,
Of the sparkling beer of barley.
Bring to me a foaming goblet

Of the barley of my fathers,
Lest my singing grow too weary,
Singing from the water only.
Bring me too a cup of strong beer;
It will add to our enchantment,
To the pleasure of the evening,
Northland's long and dreary evening,
For the beauty of the day-dawn,
For the pleasure of the morning,
The beginning of the new day.
   Often I have heard them chanting,
Often I have heard them singing,
That the nights come to us singly,
That the Moon beams on us singly,
That the Sun shines on us singly;
Singly also, Wainamoinen,
The renowned and wise enchanter,
Born from everlasting Ether
Of his mother, Ether's daughter.

These beautiful lines from the prologue may aptly be followed by the last lines from the rune of Mariatta, which describe the passing of the hero, Wainamoinen.

   As the years passed, Wainamoinen
Recognized his waning powers:
Empty-handed, heavy-hearted,
Sang his farewell song to Northland,
To the people of Wainola;
Sang himself a boat of copper.
Beautiful his bark of magic;
At the helm sat the magician,
Sat the ancient wisdom-singer.
Westward, westward, sailed the hero
O'er the blue-black of the waters,
Singing as he left Wainola,
This his plaintive song and echo:—
«Suns may rise and set in Suomi,
Rise and set for generations,
When the North will learn my teachings,
Will recall my wisdom-sayings,
Hungry for the true religion.
Then will Suomi need my coming,
Watch for me at dawn of morning,
That I may bring back the Sampo,

Bring anew the harp of joyance,
Bring again the golden moonlight,
Bring again the silver sunshine,
Peace and plenty to the Northland."
  Thus the ancient Wainamoinen,
In his copper-banded vessel,
Left his tribe in Kalevala,
Sailing o'er the rolling billows,
Sailing through the azure vapors,
Sailing through the dusk of evening,
Sailing to the fiery sunset,
To the higher-landed regions,
To the lower verge of heaven;
Quickly gained the far horizon,
Gained the purple-colored harbor.
There his bark he firmly anchored,
Rested in his boat of copper;
But he left his harp of magic,
Left his songs and wisdom-sayings,
To the lasting joy of Suomi.

Truly, Wainamoinen has left his songs and wisdom-sayings in the heart and in the brain of his people, of which the 'Kalevala' is the mirror.

William Sharp

KĀLIDĀSA

(Presumably, Sixth Century A. D.)

BY A. V. WILLIAMS JACKSON

KĀLIDĀSA is the poet in Sanskrit literature whose name may best be compared with Shakespeare. No less an authority than Sir William Jones styled him «the Indian Shakespeare» when he made Kālidāsa's name known to the Western World by translating his romantic play 'Çakuntalā' into English. 'Çakuntalā' has ever been a magic word for enchantment since Goethe, with somewhat of a poet's ecstasy, wrote those oft-quoted lines which may be rendered:—

«Would'st thou tell of the blossoms of Spring, and paint the ripe fruits of the Autumn,
All that may charm and delight with fullness and joy manifold;
Would'st thou combine in one word the enchantments of Earth and of Heaven,—
I'll name, O Çakuntalā, thee; in thy name alone all is told.»

Or as the original stanza runs:—

«Willst du die Blüthe des frühen, die Früchte des späteren Jahres,
Willst du was reizt und entzückt, willst du was sättigt und nährt,
Willst du den Himmel, die Erde mit Einem Namen begreifen,
Nenn ich, Sakuntala, dich, und so ist Alles gesagt.»

The same enthusiasm for Kālidāsa and 'Çakuntalā' is echoed in the writings of Schiller, and by many writers who have since found much to admire in this poet of mediæval India.

Respecting the life of this gifted playwright and lyrical writer, however, we have little if any authentic information. The era in which he lived has been the subject of much discussion. The native tradition favors the first century B. C. as the time when he flourished; but the consensus of scholarly opinion points to the middle of the sixth century A. D. as probably the time when Kālidāsa lived and wrote at the court of King Vikramāditya. Vikrama's reign was a renaissance period in Sanskrit letters, and Kālidāsa's name is spoken of as one of «the nine jewels» of Vikrama's throne; and his work is closely associated with the literary revival, as is shown under 'Indian

Literature› in the present volumes. The poet's graphic and beautiful descriptions of the city Ujjain, and his familiarity with court life, show that he probably enjoyed for a long time the patronage of his royal protector; although the epilogue of his drama ‹Vikramorvaçī› seems to indicate straitened circumstances. The poet's fondness for the Himālayas and mountain pictures, combined with other facts, seems to point toward a Kashmir home. There is reason to believe that he had traveled somewhat. Certain characteristics of his own nature, moreover, are undoubtedly reflected in the tenderness, grace, beauty, delicacy, and passionate feeling that is found in his poetry. There is a story that like Marlowe, his death was violent,—that he perished by the hand of a woman, who to win a monarch's favor, claimed one of Kālidāsa's improvised verses as her own, and murdered the poet lest the truth should be discovered. But enough of such gossip! This graceful, sensitive, yet thoroughly manly poet is firm and secure in his title to noble and lasting fame.

Kālidāsa's renown does not rest alone on his dramatic work, but it rests also upon his lyrical, descriptive, and narrative poetry. Of his three dramas, ‹Çakuntalā,› ‹Vikramorvaçī,› and ‹Mālavikāgnimitra,› the last named is probably the earlier in point of composition. There is no reason to doubt Kālidāsa's authorship. It is a play written on the conventional lines of several Hindu dramas which followed it,—a play of court life and romantic incident. The love of King Agnimitra for the dancing-girl Mālavikā, a handmaid to the queen, forms its subject. In spite of the opposition of the queen and the jealousy of a younger consort, the king finds an opportunity to express his admiration; and after many amusing or distressing incidents the girl is found to be a princess in disguise, and all ends happily in union and general reconciliation. The scene in which the fair Mālavikā exhibits her skill in dancing before the king and queen, with the revered Buddhist nun as referee in judging which of the two rival professors has proved himself the better teacher, is quite cleverly arranged, and a selection from it is given below. As the plot is confined to court life and to social intercourse in the palace, the play forms a contrast to the ‹Çakuntalā,› in which the plot is partly engaged with the supernatural; or a contrast again to the ‹Vikramorvaçī› (Nymph Won by Heroism), in which the mythical, marvelous, and supermundane abound. The plots of the two latter plays are described under ‹Indian Literature›; and the comments that are made here are added simply by way of supplementing the main points there presented regarding Kālidāsa as a dramatic poet.

In the field of the romantic epopee, Kālidāsa ranks first in his ‹Raghuvança,› or ‹Line of Raghu,›—a poem in eighteen cantos tracing the descendants of the solar kings, or the line from which the great Rāma is sprung. Parts of the poem are Vergilian in tone, but according to our taste they lack the classic restraint of the Roman writer. Similar in character is Kālidāsa's narrative from 'Kumārasambhava,' or Birth of the War Prince, which may be read as far as the seventh canto in Griffith's rhymed translation. In respect to Kālidāsa's lyrical poetry, it is not necessary to add anything here regarding the 'Ritusanhara,' a sort of Sanskrit Thomson's 'Seasons,' which has been sufficiently discussed under 'Indian Literature.' A few additional words, however, may be devoted to Kālidāsa's lyrical masterpiece, 'Meghadūta,' (the Cloud-Messenger.) This love message which the banished Yaksha (demigod) intrusts to the cloud to convey to his beloved, has almost the feeling of a Shelley. The poem is short,—not much over a hundred stanzas; but the beauty of its description of natural phenomena, and the fineness of its lyrical passion, render it worthy of the reputation which it enjoys in India and of the attention which some lovers of poetry in the Occident have given it.

As a poet, Kālidāsa combines art with nature. His language and his style have all the finish and skillful elaboration, without the labored workmanship and meretricious faults, that mark the later development and decay of Sanskrit art-poetry. In his writings the literary student will find certain elements that recall the renaissance spirit of Marlowe or of Keats rather than the soul of Shakespeare. One might be reminded in his lyrical poetry and descriptive narrative, for example, of the lavishness and exuberance of Marlowe, or of the beauty, color, and passionate effusiveness of Keats. He excels in poetic outbursts of pure fancy, but he can reflect in philosophic tone, and can be stirred by the pomp of war and the trumpet's blare; yet these passages are not common. His description of natural scenery and his love of animals seem almost Wordsworthian; for nature is nearer to the heart of Kālidāsa than to almost any other poet's heart. In dramatic work, if such comparison be possible, his hand is rather the hand of the earlier Shakespeare, or the touch of the later romantic Shakespeare, than the Shakespeare of the great tragic period; for the Hindu dramatic canon practically excluded Kālidāsa from tragic subjects. Taken for all in all, he is a poet worthy to be studied by a poet and by any true lover of poetry, and his work well merits a place in the best literature of the world.

A. V. Williams Jackson

FROM ‹MĀLAVIKĀGNIMITRA›

Then are seen, after the orchestral arrangements have been completed, the King, *with his friend, seated on a throne, the* Queen Dhārinī, *and the retinue in order of rank.*

King — Reverend madam! which of the two professors shall first exhibit to us the skill which he has infused into his pupil?

Parivrājikā — Even supposing their attainments to be equal, Ganadāsa ought surely to be preferred on account of his being the elder.

King — Well, Maudgalya, go and tell these gentlemen this, and then go about your business.

Chamberlain — As the King commands.

Ganadāsa [*entering*] — King, there is a composition of Çarmistha, consisting of four parts in medium time: your Highness ought to hear attentively one-fourth of it performed with appropriate gestures.

King — Professor! I am most respectively attentive.

[*Exit Ganadāsa.*

King [*aside to Vidūshaka, the Buffoon*] — Friend, my eye, eager to behold her who is concealed by the curtain, through impatience seems to be endeavoring to draw it up.

Vidūshaka [*aside*] — Ha! the honey of your eyes is approaching, but the bee is near; therefore look on with caution.

Then Mālavikā *enters, with the teacher of dancing contemplating the elegant movement of her limbs*

Vidūshaka [*aside*] — Look, your Highness. Her beauty does not fall short of the picture [with which you fell in love].

King [*aside*] — Friend, my mind anticipated that her beauty could not possibly come up to that represented in the picture; but now I think that the painter by whom she was taken studied his model but carelessly.

Ganadāsa — My dear child, dismiss your timidity; be composed.

King — Oh, the perfection of her beauty in every posture! For her face has long eyes and the splendor of an autumn moon; her two arms are gracefully curved at the shoulders; her chest is compact, having firm and swelling breasts; her sides are as if planed off; her waist may be spanned by the hand; her hips slope elegantly, her feet have curving toes, her body is as graceful as the ideal in the mind of the teacher of dancing.

[*Mālavikā, having approached, sings the composition, consisting of four parts.*]

Mālavikā [*singing*]—

My beloved is hard to obtain; be thou without hope with respect to him, O my heart! Ha! the outer corner of my left eye throbs somewhat: how is this man, seen after a long time, to be obtained? My lord, consider that I am devoted to thee with ardent longing.

[*She goes through a pantomime expressive of the sentiment.*]

Vidūshaka [*aside*]—Ha! ha! this lady may be said to have made use of the composition in four parts for the purpose of flinging herself at your head.

King [*aside to Vidūshaka*]—My friend, this is the state of the hearts of both of us. Certainly she, by accompanying the words "know that I am devoted to thee," that came in her song, with expressive action pointing at her own body,—seeing no other way of telling her love, owing to the neighborhood of Dhārinī,—addressed herself to me under pretense of courting a beautiful youth.

[*Mālavikā at the end of her song makes as if she would leave the stage.*]

Vidūshaka—Stop, lady! you have somewhat neglected the proper order; I will ask about it, if you please.

Ganadāsa—My dear child, stop a minute; you shall go after your performance has been pronounced faultless.

[*Mālavikā turns round and stands still.*]

King [*to himself*]—Ah, her beauty gains fresh splendor in every posture. For her standing attitude, in which she is placing on her hip her left hand, the bracelet of which clings motionless at the wrist, and making her other hand hang down loosely like the branch of a *çyama*-tree, and casting down her eye on the inlaid pavement on which she is pushing about a flower with her toe, an attitude in which the upper part of her body is upright, is more attractive even than her dancing.

Translation of C. H. Tawney.

FROM THE ‹RAGHUVANÇA›

Hymn Addressed to Vishnu by the Deities

Glory to Thee, who art first the creator of the universe, next its upholder, and finally its destroyer; glory to Thee in this threefold character. As water falling from the sky, though having but one flavor, assumes different flavors in different bodies, so Thou, associated with the three qualities [Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, or Goodness, Passion, and Darkness], assumest [three] states [those of creator, preserver, and destroyer], though Thyself unchanged. Immeasurable, Thou measurest the worlds; desiring nothing, Thou art the fulfiller of desires; unconquered, Thou art a conqueror; utterly indiscernible, Thou art the cause of all that is discerned. Though one, Thou, from one or another cause, assumest this or that condition; Thy variations are compared to those which crystal undergoes from the contact of different colors. Thou art known as abiding in [our] hearts, and yet as remote; as free from affection, ascetic, merciful, untouched by sin, primeval, and imperishable. Thou knowest all things, Thyself unknown; sprung from Thyself [or self-existent], Thou art the source of all things; Thou art the lord of all, Thyself without a master; though but one, Thou assumest all forms. Thou art declared to be He who is celebrated in the seven Sāma-hymns, to be He who sleeps on the waters of the seven oceans, whose face is lighted up by the god of seven rays [Fire], and who is the one refuge of the seven worlds. Knowledge which gains the four classes of fruit [virtue, pleasure, wealth, and final liberation], the division of time into four yugas [ages], the fourfold division of the people into castes,—all these things come from Thee, the four-faced. Yogins [devoutly contemplative men] with minds subdued by exercise recognize Thee, the luminous, abiding in their hearts; [and so attain] to liberation from earthly existence. Who comprehends the truth regarding Thee, who art unborn, and yet becomest born; who art passionless, yet slayest thine enemies; who sleepest, and yet art awake? Thou art capable of enjoying sounds and other objects of sense; of practicing severe austerity, of protecting thy creatures, and of living in indifference to all external things. The roads leading to perfection, which vary according to the different revealed systems, all end in Thee, as the waves of the Ganges flow to the ocean.

For those passionless men whose hearts are fixed on Thee, who have committed to Thee their works, Thou art a refuge, so that they escape further mundane births. Thy glory, as manifested to the senses in the earth and other objects, is yet incomprehensible: what shall be said of Thyself, who canst be proved only by the authority of Scripture and by inference? Seeing that the remembrance of Thee alone purifies a man,—the rewards of other mental acts also, when directed towards Thee, are thereby indicated. As the waters exceed the ocean, and as the beams of light exceed the sun, so Thy acts transcend our praises. There is nothing for Thee to attain which Thou hast not already attained: kindness to the world is the only motive for Thy birth and for Thy actions. If this our hymn now comes to a close after celebrating Thy greatness, the reason of this is our exhaustion, or our inability to say more, not that there is any limit to Thy attributes.

Translation of J. Muir.

FROM ‹ÇAKUNTALĀ; OR, THE LOST RING›

Scene: A Forest. Enter King Dushyanta, *armed with a bow and arrow, in a chariot, chasing an antelope, attended by his* Charioteer.

CHARIOTEER [*looking at the deer and then at the King*]—Great Prince,
When on the antelope I bend my gaze,
And on your Majesty, whose mighty bow
Has its string firmly braced,—before my eyes
The god that wields the trident seems revealed,
Chasing the deer that flies from him in vain.

King—Charioteer, this fleet antelope has drawn us far from my attendants. See! there he runs:

Aye and anon his graceful neck he bends
To cast a glance at the pursuing car;
And dreading now the swift-descending shaft,
Contracts into itself his slender frame:
About his path, in scattered fragments strewn,
The half-chewed grass falls from his panting mouth;
See! in his airy bounds he seems to fly,
And leaves no trace upon th' elastic turf.

[*With astonishment*]—How now! swift as is our pursuit, I scarce can see him.

Charioteer — Sire, the ground here is full of hollows; I have therefore drawn in the reins and checked the speed of the chariot. Hence the deer has somewhat gained upon us. Now that we are passing over level ground, we shall have no difficulty in overtaking him.

King — Loosen the reins, then.

Charioteer — The King is obeyed. [*Drives the chariot at full speed.*] Great Prince, see! see!

Responsive to the slackened rein, the steeds,
Chafing with eager rivalry, career
With emulative fleetness o'er the plain;
Their necks outstretched, their waving plumes that late
Fluttered above their brows, are motionless!
Their sprightly ears, but now erect, bent low;
Themselves unsullied by the circling dust
That vainly follows on their rapid course.

King [*joyously*] — In good sooth, the horses seem as if they would outstrip the steeds of Indra and the Sun.

That which but now showed to my view minute
Quickly assumes dimension; that which seemed
A moment since disjoined in diverse parts
Looks suddenly like one compacted whole;
That which is really crooked in its shape,
In the far distance left, grows regular;
Wondrous the chariot's speed, that in a breath
Makes the near distant and the distant near.

Now, Charioteer, see me kill the deer. [*Takes aim.*]

A voice behind the scenes — Hold, O King! this deer belongs to our hermitage. Kill it not! kill it not!

Charioteer [*listening and looking*] — Great King, some hermits have stationed themselves so as to screen the antelope at the very moment of its coming within range of your arrow.

King [*hastily*] — Then stop the horses.

Charioteer [*stops the chariot*] — I obey.

Enter a Hermit, *and two others with him*

Hermit [*raising his hand*] — This deer, O King, belongs to our hermitage. Kill it not! kill it not!

Now heaven forbid this barbèd shaft descend
Upon the fragile body of a fawn,
Like fire upon a heap of tender flowers!
Can thy steel bolts no meeter quarry find
Than the warm life-blood of a harmless deer?
Restore, great Prince, thy weapon to its quiver.
More it becomes thy arms to shield the weak,
Than to bring anguish on the innocent.

King [*replaces the arrow in its quiver*] — 'Tis done.

Hermit — Worthy is this action of a Prince, the light of Puru's race:

Well does this act befit a Prince like thee,
Right worthy is it of thine ancestry.
Thy guerdon be a son of peerless worth,
Whose wide dominion shall embrace the earth.

Both the other Hermits [*raising their hands*] — May Heaven indeed grant thee a son, a sovereign of the earth from sea to sea!

King [*bowing*] — I accept with gratitude a Brahman's benediction.

Here enter Çakuntalā, *with her two female companions, and carrying a watering-pot for sprinkling the flowers*

Çakuntalā — This way, my dear companions, this way.

Anasūyā — Dear Çakuntalā, one would think that father Kanwa had more affection for the shrubs of the hermitage even than for you, seeing he assigns to you, who are yourself as delicate as the fresh-blown jasmine, the task of filling with water the trenches which encircle their roots.

Çakuntalā — Dear Anasūyā, although I am charged by my good father with this duty, yet I cannot regard it as a task. I really feel a sisterly love for these plants. [*Continues watering the shrubs.*]

King — Can this be the daughter of Kanwa? The saintly man, though descended from the great Kāçyapa, must be very deficient in judgment to habituate such a maiden to the life of a recluse.

The sage who would this form of artless grace
Inure to penance, thoughtlessly attempts
To cleave in twain the hard acacia's stem
With the soft edge of a blue lotos leaf.

Well! concealed behind this tree, I will watch her without raising her suspicions. [*Conceals himself.*]

Çakuntalā — Good Anasūyā, Priyamvadā has drawn this bark dress too tightly about my chest. I pray thee, loosen it a little.

Anasūyā — I will. [*Loosens it.*]

Priyamvadā [*smiling*] — Why do you lay the blame on me? Blame rather your own blooming youthfulness, which imparts fullness to your bosom.

King — A most just observation!

This youthful form, whose bosom's swelling charms
By the bark's knotted tissue are concealed,
Like some fair bud close folded in its sheath,
Gives not to view the blooming of its beauty.

But what am I saying? In real truth, this bark dress, though ill suited to her figure, sets it off like an ornament.

The lotos with the Saivala entwined
Is not a whit less brilliant; dusky spots
Heighten the lustre of the cold-rayed moon:
This lovely maiden in her dress of bark
Seems all the lovelier. E'en the meanest garb
Gives to true beauty fresh attractiveness.

Çakuntalā [*looking before her*] — Yon Kēsara-tree beckons to me with its young shoots, which, as the breeze waves them to and fro, appear like slender fingers. I will go and attend to it. [*Walks towards it.*]

Priyamvadā — Dear Çakuntalā, prithee, rest in that attitude one moment.

Çakuntalā — Why so?

Priyamvadā — The Kēsara-tree, whilst your graceful form bends about its stem, appears as if it were wedded to some lovely twining creeper.

Çakuntalā — Ah! saucy girl, you are most appropriately named Priyamvadā [speaker of flattering things].

King — What Priyamvadā says, though complimentary, is nevertheless true. Verily,—

Her ruddy lip vies with the opening bud;
Her graceful arms are as the twining stalks;
And her whole form is radiant with the glow
Of youthful beauty, as the tree with bloom.

Anasūyā — See, dear Çakuntalā, here is the young jasmine, which you named "the Moonlight of the Grove," the self-elected wife of the mango-tree. Have you forgotten it?

Çakuntalā — Rather will I forget myself. [*Approaching the plant and looking at it.*] How delightful is the season when the jasmine-creeper and the mango-tree seem thus to unite in mutual embraces! The fresh blossoms of the jasmine resemble the bloom of a young bride, and the newly formed shoots of the mango appear to make it her natural protector. [*Continues gazing at it.*]

Priyamvadā [*smiling*] — Do you know, my Anasūyā, why Çakuntalā gazes so intently at the jasmine?

Anasūyā — No, indeed; I cannot imagine. I pray thee tell me.

Priyamvadā — She is wishing that as the jasmine is united to a suitable tree, so in like manner she may obtain a husband worthy of her.

Çakuntalā — Speak for yourself, girl; this is the thought in your own mind. [*Continues watering the flowers.*]

King — Would that my union with her were permissible! and yet I hardly dare hope that the maiden is sprung from a caste different from that of the head of the hermitage. But away with doubt:

That she is free to wed a warrior-king
My heart attests. For, in conflicting doubts,
The secret promptings of the good man's soul
Are an unerring index of the truth.

However, come what may, I will ascertain the fact.

Çakuntalā [*in a flurry*]—Ah! a bee, disturbed by the sprinkling of the water, has left the young jasmine, and is trying to settle on my face. [*Attempts to drive it away.*]

King [*gazing at her ardently*]—Beautiful! there is something charming even in her repulse.

Where'er the bee his eager onset plies,
Now here, now there, she darts her kindling eyes:
What love hath yet to teach, fear teaches now,
The furtive glances and the frowning brow.
[*In a tone of envy*]
Ah, happy bee! how boldly dost thou try
To steal the lustre from her sparkling eye;
And in thy circling movements hover near,
To murmur tender secrets in her ear,
Or, as she coyly waves her hand, to sip
Voluptuous nectar from her lower lip!
While rising doubts my heart's fond hopes destroy,
Thou dost the fullness of her charms enjoy.

Çakuntalā—This impertinent bee will not rest quiet. I must move elsewhere. [*Moving a few steps off, and casting a glance around.*] How now! he is following me here. Help! my dear friends, help! deliver me from the attacks of this troublesome insect.

Priyamvadā and Anasūyā—How can we deliver you? Call Dushyanta to your aid. The sacred groves are under the King's special protection.

King—An excellent opportunity for me to show myself. Fear not— [*Checks himself when the words are half uttered. Aside.*] But stay, if I introduce myself in this manner, they will know me to be the King. Be it so: I will accost them, nevertheless.

[The King, filled with admiration, declares his love for Çakuntalā, and in the next act he is espoused to her according to the Gandharva ceremonial. He then departs from the hermitage and returns to the royal city; but leaves with Çakuntalā a precious ring, which she is to present when she claims him as her lawful husband. The play continues, and shows how the fair Çakuntalā, so deeply enamored, becomes absent-minded and neglects to do some act of homage to an aged hermit; who consequently pronounces a curse upon her that her beloved shall absolutely forget her until he sees the magic ring, which alone has power to remove the curse. King Dushyanta accordingly loses all recollection of Çakuntalā; and Çakuntalā's foster-father, the saintly Kanwa, determines to send his daughter to the King, that her child may be born under the royal roof. The Fourth Act opens with the day of Çakuntalā's departure from the hermitage.]

Scene: The neighborhood of the hermitage. Enter one of Kanwa's Pupils, *just arisen from his couch at the dawn of day.*

Pupil—My master, the venerable Kanwa, who is but lately returned from his pilgrimage, has ordered me to ascertain how the time goes. I have therefore come into the open air to see if it be still dark. [*Walking and looking about.*] Oh! the dawn has already broken.

Lo! in one quarter of the sky, the Moon,
Lord of the herbs and night-expanding flowers,
Sinks towards his bed behind the western hills;
While in the east, preceded by the Dawn,
His blushing charioteer, the glorious Sun,
Begins his course, and far into the gloom
Casts the first radiance of his Orient beams.
Hail! co-eternal orbs, that rise to set,
And set to rise again; symbols divine
Of man's reverses, life's vicissitudes.

And now—

While the round Moon withdraws his looming disk
Beneath the western sky, the full-blown flower
Of the night-loving lotos sheds her leaves
In sorrow for his loss, bequeathing naught
But the sweet memory of her loveliness
To my bereavèd sight: e'en as the bride
Disconsolately mourns her absent lord,
And yields her heart a prey to anxious grief.

Anasūyā [*entering abruptly*]—Little as I know of the ways of the world, I cannot help thinking that King Dushyanta is treating Çakuntalā very improperly.

Pupil—Well, I must let my reverend preceptor know that it is time to offer the burnt oblation. [*Exit.*

Anasūyā—I am broad awake, but what shall I do? I have no energy to go about my usual occupations. My hands and feet seem to have lost their power. Well, Love has gained his object; and Love only is to blame for having induced our dear friend, in the innocence of her heart, to confide in such a perfidious man. Possibly however the imprecation of Durvāsas may be already taking effect. Indeed, I cannot otherwise account for the King's strange conduct, in allowing so long a time to elapse without even a letter; and that too after so many promises and protestations. I cannot think what to do, unless we send him the ring which was to be the token of recognition. But which of these austere hermits could we ask to be the bearer of it? Then again, Father Kanwa has just returned from his pilgrimage; and how am I to inform him of Çakuntalā's marriage to King Dushyanta, and her expectation of being soon a mother? I never could bring myself to tell him, even if I felt that Çakuntalā had been in fault, which she certainly has not. What is to be done?

Priyamvadā [*entering joyfully*] — Quick, quick! Anasūyā! come and assist in the joyful preparations for Çakuntalā's departure to her husband's palace.

Anasūyā — My dear girl, what can you mean?

Priyamvadā — Listen, now, and I will tell you all about it. I went just now to Çakuntalā, to inquire whether she had slept comfortably.

Anasūyā — Well, well; go on.

Priyamvadā — She was sitting with her face bowed down to the very ground with shame when Father Kanwa entered, and embracing her, of his own accord offered her his congratulations. «I give thee joy, my child,» he said: «we have had an auspicious omen. The priest who offered the oblation dropped it into the very centre of the sacred fire, though thick smoke obstructed his vision. Henceforth thou wilt cease to be an object of compassion. This very day I purpose sending thee, under the charge of certain trusty hermits, to the King's palace; and shall deliver thee into the hands of thy husband, as I would commit knowledge to the keeping of a wise and faithful student.» . . .

[Çakuntalā's touching farewell to the hermitage, and her tender leave-taking of her young friends, are dramatically presented with much delicacy of feeling. Two hermits, and an aged matron, Gautamī, accompany her on the journey. Her arrival at the palace, in the Fifth Act, is announced to the King by the Chamberlain of State.]

Chamberlain — Well, well: a monarch's business is to sustain the world, and he must not expect much repose; because —

Onward, forever onward, in his car
The unwearied Sun pursues his daily course,
Nor tarries to unyoke his glittering steeds;
And ever moving, speeds the rushing Wind
Through boundless space, filling the universe
With his life-giving breezes; day and night
The King of Serpents on his thousand heads
Upholds the incumbent earth: and even so,
Unceasing toil is aye the lot of kings,
Who, in return, draw nurture from their subjects.

I will therefore deliver my message. [*Walking on and looking about.*] Ah! here comes the King:

His subjects are his children; through the day,
Like a fond father, to supply their wants
Incessantly he labors: wearied now,
The monarch seeks seclusion and repose;
E'en as the prince of elephants defies
The sun's fierce heat, and leads the fainting herd
To verdant pastures, ere his way-worn limbs
He yields to rest beneath the cooling shade.

[*Approaching*] — Victory to the King! So please your Majesty, some hermits who live in a forest near the Snowy Mountains have arrived here, bringing certain women with them. They have a message to deliver from the sage Kanwa, and desire an audience. I await your Majesty's commands.

King [*respectfully*] — A message from the sage Kanwa, did you say?

Chamberlain — Even so, my liege.

King — Tell my domestic priest Somarāta to receive the hermits with due honor, according to the prescribed form.

[The hermits introduce Çakuntalā, accompanied by Gautamī; and deliver the message from her father sanctioning her marriage with the King, and requesting her honorable reception into the palace.]

King — Holy men, I have revolved the matter in my mind; but the more I think of it, the less able am I to recollect that I ever contracted an alliance with this lady. What answer, then, can I possibly give you when I do not believe myself to be her husband, and I plainly see that she is soon to become a mother?

Çakuntalā [*aside*] — Woe! woe! Is our very marriage to be called in question by my own husband? Ah me! is this to be the end of all my bright visions of wedded happiness?

Çārngarava — Beware!

Beware how thou insult the holy Sage!
Remember how he generously allowed
Thy secret union with his foster-child;
And how, when thou didst rob him of his treasure,
He sought to furnish thee excuse, when rather
He should have cursed thee for a ravisher.

Çāradwata — Çārngarava, speak to him no more. Çakuntalā, our part is performed; we have said all we had to say, and the King has replied in the manner thou hast heard. It is now thy turn to give him convincing evidence of thy marriage.

Çakuntalā — Since his feeling towards me has undergone a complete revolution, what will it avail to revive old recollections? One thing is clear, — I shall soon have to mourn my own widowhood. [*Aloud.*] My revered husband — [*Stops short.*] But no — I dare not address thee by this title, since thou hast refused to acknowledge our union. Noble descendant of Puru! It is not worthy of thee to betray an innocent-minded girl, and disown her in such terms, after having so lately and so solemnly plighted thy vows to her in the hermitage.

King [*stopping his ears*] — I will hear no more. Be such a crime far from my thoughts!

What evil spirit can possess thee, lady,
That thou dost seek to sully my good name
By base aspersions? like a swollen torrent,
That, leaping from its narrow bed, o'erthrows
The tree upon its bank, and strives to blend
Its turbid waters with the crystal stream?

Çakuntalā — If then thou really believest me to be the wife of another, and thy present conduct proceeds from some cloud that obscures thy recollection, I will easily convince thee by this token.

King — An excellent idea!

Çakuntalā [*feeling for the ring*] — Alas! alas! woe is me! There is no ring on my finger! [*Looks with anguish at Gautamī.*]

Gautamī — The ring must have slipped off when thou wast in the act of offering homage to the holy water of Çachī's sacred pool, near Çakrāvatāra.

King [*smiling*] — People may well talk of the readiness of woman's invention! Here is an instance of it.

Çakuntalā — Say rather, of the omnipotence of fate. I will mention another circumstance, which may yet convince thee.

King — By all means let me hear it at once.

Çakuntalā — One day, while we were seated in a jasmine bower, thou didst pour into the hollow of thine hand some water, sprinkled by a recent shower in the cup of a lotos blossom —

King — I am listening; proceed.

Çakuntalā — At that instant, my adopted child, the little fawn, with soft long eyes, came running towards us. Upon which, before tasting the water thyself, thou didst kindly offer some to the little creature, saying fondly, «Drink first, gentle fawn.» But she could not be induced to drink from the hand of a stranger; though immediately afterwards, when I took the water in my own hand, she drank with perfect confidence. Then, with a smile, thou didst say. «Every creature confides naturally in its own kind. You are both inhabitants of the same forest, and have learnt to trust each other.»

[King Dushyanta vainly tries to recall Çakuntalā to mind, but the fatal power of the old sage's curse still clouds his memory. All efforts failing, Çakuntalā is suddenly swept from sight by a whirlwind and carried to a remote mountain; where in a hallowed spot, she gives birth to a son, the ancestor of future kings. At this moment the enchanted ring, which had been swallowed by a fish, is unexpectedly brought to light, and Dushyanta's mental vision is at once restored. He deeply mourns the loss of his beloved Çakuntalā, and finds distraction from his grief only in aiding the gods in a holy war against the demons. Some years elapse, and the god Indra, to reward Dushyanta's heroic service, transports him through the sky to the far-off mountain retreat of Çakuntalā and their little son. The reunion of the King with his wife and child is touchingly presented in the last act of the drama.]

Enter a Child, *attended by* two Women *of the hermitage, and dragging a lion's cub by the ears.*

Child — Open your mouth, my young lion; I want to count your teeth.

First Attendant — You naughty child, why do you tease the animals? Know you not that we cherish them in this hermitage as if they were our own children? In good sooth, you have a high spirit of your own, and are beginning already to do justice to the name Sarva-damana [All-taming], given you by the hermits.

King — Strange! my heart inclines towards the boy with almost as much affection as if he were my own child. What can be the reason? I suppose my own childlessness makes me yearn towards the sons of others.

Second Attendant — This lioness will certainly attack you if you do not release her whelp.

Child [*laughing*] — Oh! indeed! let her come. Much I fear her, to be sure! [*Pouts his under lip in defiance.*]

King — The germ of mighty courage lies concealed
Within this noble infant, like a spark
Beneath the fuel, waiting but a breath
To fan the flame and raise a conflagration.

First Attendant — Let the young lion go, like a dear child, and I will give you something else to play with.

Child — Where is it? Give it me first. [*Stretches out his hand.*]

King [*looking at his hand*] — How's this? His hand exhibits one of those mystic marks which are the sure prognostic of universal empire. See!

His fingers stretched in eager expectation
To grasp the wished-for toy, and knit together
By a close-woven web, in shape resemble
A lotos blossom, whose expanding petals
The early dawn has only half unfolded.

Second Attendant — We shall never pacify him by mere words, dear Suvratā. Be kind enough to go to my cottage, and you will find there a plaything belonging to Mārkāndeya, one of the hermit's children. It is a peacock made of china-ware, painted in many colors. Bring it here for the child.

First Attendant — Very well. [*Exit.*]

Child — No, no: I shall go on playing with the young lion. [*Looks at the female attendant and laughs.*]

King — I feel an unaccountable affection for this wayward child.

How blest the virtuous parents whose attire
Is soiled with dust, by raising from the ground
The child that asks a refuge in their arms!
And happy are they while with lisping prattle,
In accents sweetly inarticulate,
He charms their ears; and with his artless smiles
Gladdens their hearts, revealing to their gaze
His tiny teeth just budding into view.

Attendant — I see how it is. He pays me no manner of attention. [*Looking off the stage.*] I wonder whether any of the hermits are about here. [*Seeing the King.*] Kind sir, could you come hither a moment and help me to release the young lion from the clutch of this child, who is teasing him in boyish play?

King [*approaching and smiling*] — Listen to me, thou child of a mighty saint:

Dost thou dare show a wayward spirit here?
Here, in this hallowed region? Take thou heed
Lest, as the serpent's young defiles the sandal,
Thou bring dishonor on the holy sage,
Thy tender-hearted parent, who delights
To shield from harm the tenants of the wood.

Attendant — Gentle sir, I thank you; but he is not the saint's son.

King — His behavior and whole bearing would have led me to doubt it, had not the place of his abode encouraged the idea.

[*Follows the child, and takes him by the hand, according to the request of the attendant.*]

Aside — I marvel that the touch of this strange child
Should thrill me with delight; if so it be,
How must the fond caresses of a son
Transport the father's soul who gave him being!

Attendant [*looking at them both*] — Wonderful! Prodigious!

King — What excites your surprise, my good woman?

Attendant — I am astonished at the striking resemblance between the child and yourself; and what is still more extraordinary, he seems to have taken to you kindly and submissively, though you are a stranger to him.

King [*fondling the child*]—If he be not the son of the great sage, of what family does he come, may I ask?

Attendant—Of the race of Puru.

King [*aside*]—What! are we then descended from the same ancestry? This no doubt accounts for the resemblance she traces between the child and me. Certainly it has always been an established usage among the princes of Puru's race—

To dedicate the morning of their days
To the world's weal, in palaces and halls,
'Mid luxury and regal pomp abiding;
Then, in the wane of life, to seek release
From kingly cares, and make the hallowed shade
Of sacred trees their last asylum, where
As hermits they may practice self-abasement,
And bind themselves by rigid vows of penance.

[*Aloud.*] But how could mortals by their own power gain admission to this sacred region?

Attendant—Your remark is just; but your wonder will cease when I tell you that his mother is the offspring of a celestial nymph, and gave him birth in the hallowed grove of Kāçyapa.

King [*aside*]—Strange that my hopes should be again excited! [*Aloud.*] But what, let me ask, was the name of the prince whom she deigned to honor with her hand?

Attendant—How could I think of polluting my lips by the mention of a wretch who had the cruelty to desert his lawful wife?

King [*aside*]—Ha! the description suits me exactly. Would I could bring myself to inquire the name of the child's mother! [*Reflecting.*] But it is against propriety to make too minute inquiries about the wife of another man.

First Attendant [*entering with the china peacock in her hand*]—Sarva-damana, Sarva-damana, see, see, what a beautiful çakunta [*bird*].

Child [*looking round*]—My mother! Where? Let me go to her.

Both Attendants—He mistook the word «çakunta» for «Çakuntalā.» The boy dotes upon his mother, and she is ever uppermost in his thoughts.

Second Attendant—Nay, my dear child: I said, look at the beauty of this çakunta.

King [*aside*]—What! is his mother's name Çakuntalā? But the name is not uncommon among women. Alas! I fear that the mere similarity of a name, like the deceitful vapor of the desert, has once more raised my hopes only to dash them to the ground.

Child—Dear nurse, what a beautiful peacock! [*Takes the toy.*]

First Attendant [*looking at the child in great distress*]—Alas! alas! I do not see the amulet on his wrist.

King—Don't distress yourself. Here it is. It fell off while he was struggling with the young lion. [*Stoops to pick it up.*]

Both Attendants—Hold! hold! Touch it not, for your life. How marvelous! He has actually taken it up without the slightest hesitation. [*Both raise their hands to their breasts and look at each other in astonishment.*]

King—Why did you try to prevent my touching it?

First Attendant—Listen, great monarch. This amulet, known as «The Invincible,» was given to the boy by the divine son of Marīchi soon after his birth, when the natal ceremony was performed. Its peculiar virtue is, that when it falls on the ground, no one excepting the father or mother of the child can touch it unhurt.

King—And suppose another person touches it?

First Attendant—Then it instantly becomes a serpent, and bites him.

King—Have you ever witnessed the transformation with your own eyes?

Both Attendants—Over and over again.

King [*with rapture, aside*]—Joy! joy! Are then my dearest hopes to be fulfilled? [*Embraces the child.*]

Second Attendant—Come, my dear Suvratā, we must inform Çakuntalā immediately of this wonderful event, though we have to interrupt her in the performance of her religious vows. [*Exeunt.*]

Child [*to the King*]—Do not hold me. I want to go to my mother.

King—We will go to her together, and give her joy, my son.

Child—Dushyanta is my father, not you.

King [*smiling*]—His contradiction convinces me only the more.

Enter Çakuntalā, *in widow's apparel, with her long hair twisted into a single braid.*

Çakuntalā [*aside*]—I have just heard that Sarva-damana's amulet has retained its form, though a stranger raised it from the ground. I can hardly believe in my good fortune. Yet why should not Sānumati's prediction be verified?

King [*gazing at Çakuntalā*]—Alas! can this indeed be my Çakuntalā?

Clad in the weeds of widowhood, her face
Emaciate with fasting, her long hair
Twined in a single braid, her whole demeanor
Expressive of her purity of soul:
With patient constancy she thus prolongs
The vow to which my cruelty condemned her.

Çakuntalā [*gazing at the King, who is pale with remorse*]—Surely this is not like my husband; yet who can it be that dares pollute by the pressure of his hand my child, whose amulet should protect him from a stranger's touch?

Child [*going to his mother*]—Mother, who is this man that has been kissing me and calling me his son?

King—My best beloved, I have indeed treated thee most cruelly, but am now once more thy fond and affectionate lover. Refuse not to acknowledge me as thy husband.

Çakuntalā [*aside*]—Be of good cheer, my heart. The anger of Destiny is at last appeased. Heaven regards thee with compassion. But is he in very truth my husband?

King— Behold me, best and loveliest of women,
Delivered from the cloud of fatal darkness
That erst oppressed my memory. Again
Behold us brought together by the grace
Of the great lord of Heaven. So the moon
Shines forth from dim eclipse, to blend his rays
With the soft lustre of his Rohinī.

Çakuntalā—May my husband be victorious—

[*She stops short, her voice choked with tears.*]

King— O fair one, though the utterance of thy prayer
Be lost amid the torrent of thy tears,
Yet does the sight of thy fair countenance
And of thy pallid lips, all unadorned
And colorless in sorrow for my absence,
Make me already more than conqueror.

Child—Mother, who is this man?

Çakuntalā—My child, ask the deity that presides over thy destiny.

King [*falling at Çakuntalā's feet*]—
Fairest of women, banish from thy mind
The memory of my cruelty; reproach
The fell delusion that o'erpowered my soul,
And blame not me, thy husband,—'tis the curse
Of him in whom the power of darkness reigns,
That he mistakes the gifts of those he loves
For deadly evils. Even though a friend
Should wreathe a garland on a blind man's brow,
Will he not cast it from him as a serpent?

Çakuntalā—Rise, my own husband, rise. Thou wast not to blame. My own evil deeds, committed in a former state of being, brought down this judgment upon me. How else could my husband, who was ever of a compassionate disposition, have acted so unfeelingly? [*The King rises.*] But tell me, my husband, how did the remembrance of thine unfortunate wife return to thy mind?

King — As soon as my heart's anguish is removed, and its wounds are healed, I will tell thee all.

Oh! let me, fair one, chase away the drop
That still bedews the fringes of thine eye;
And let me thus efface the memory
Of every tear that stained thy velvet cheek,
Unnoticed and unheeded by thy lord,
When in his madness he rejected thee.
[*Wipes away the tear.*]

Çakuntalā [*seeing the signet-ring on his finger*] — Ah! my dear husband, is that the Lost Ring?

King — Yes; the moment I recovered it, my memory was restored.

Çakuntalā — The ring was to blame in allowing itself to be lost at the very time when I was anxious to convince my noble husband of the reality of my marriage.

King — Receive it back, as the beautiful twining plant receives again its blossom in token of its reunion with the spring.

Çakuntalā — Nay; I can never more place confidence in it. Let my husband retain it.

Enter Mātali

Mātali — I congratulate your Majesty. Happy are you in your reunion with your wife; happy are you in beholding the face of your own son.

Translation of Monier Williams.

FROM THE ‹MEGHADŪTA,› OR CLOUD MESSENGER

A CERTAIN Yaksha [Divine Being] neglectful once of his master's task, and stript thus of his glory through his lord's
1. curse, which was to last a year and was the more grievous because of separating him from his Beloved, had taken up his abode amid the hermitages on Rāma's Hill, dense in shade trees and whose waters were hallowed by [the fair] Sītā's having bathed in them.

2. Upon this mountain the love-lorn wight, from whose wasted arm the golden bracelet had slipped down, had already spent eight weary moons, separated from his consort; when, on

the first day of the Āshādha month, he caught sight of a cloud clinging to the mountain peak and resembling an elephant with lowered tusks butting at a bank of earth.

3. Scarce checking his tears in the presence of the cloud which was a source of emotion to him, the servant of Kubera [Lord of Wealth] stood long wrapt in thought: [for truly] at the sight of a cloud the heart even of a person in happiness is stirred, but how much more when one is longing to throw his arms about [the loved one's] neck and is absent far away.

4. Now, desirous to cheer the heart of his Beloved, for the rainy month was nigh at hand, and eager to send by the cloud a message to her, telling of his welfare, the Yaksha, filled with joy, bade the cloud welcome, in loving terms, after he had worshiped it with fresh jasmine sprays, saying:— . . .

6. "I know that thou art born of a world-renowned race of clouds, Indra's chief counselor and assuming any shape at will, so I, who am separated from my consort by Fate's cruel decree, come as suppliant to thee; for better is a fruitless boon if asked of a noble person than an answered request made to a craven.

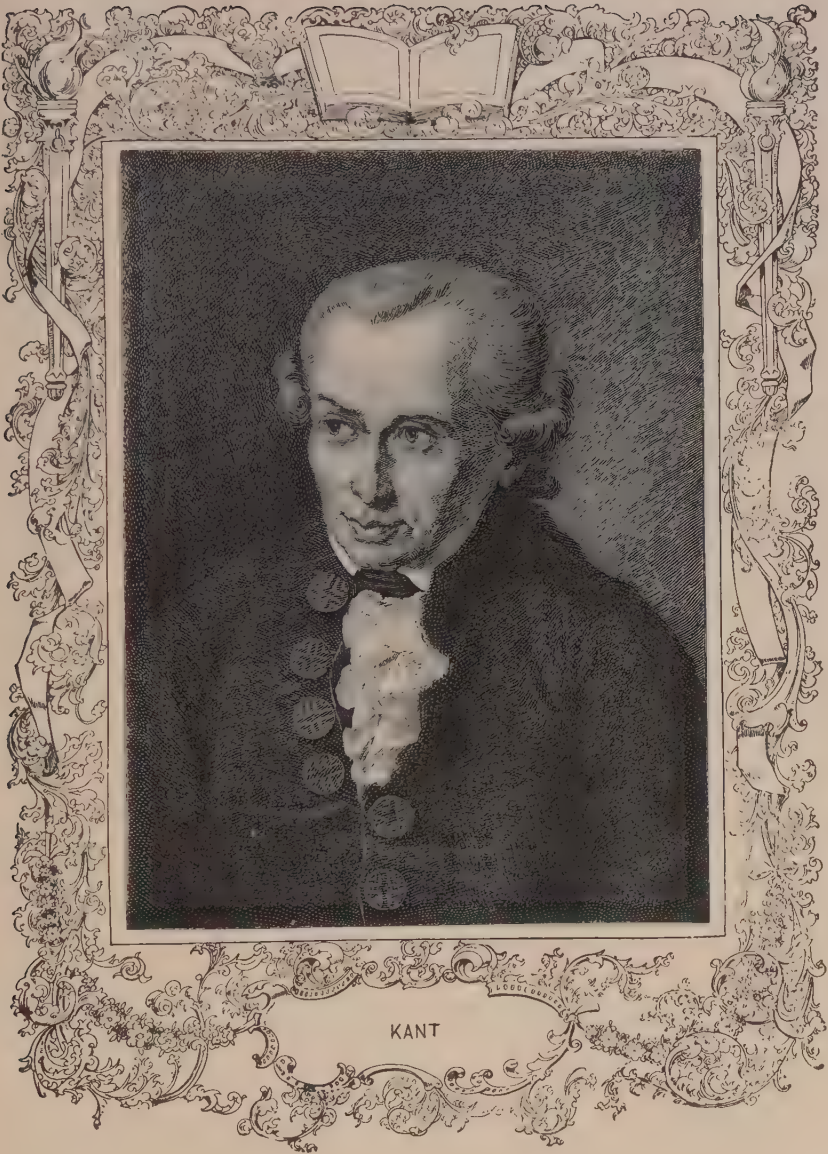
7. "Thou art, O Cloud, a refuge for the sore-distressed; deign therefore to bear a message for me whom the wrath of Kubera has banished. It is to Alakā, abode of the Yakshas' Lord, that thou must fly, where the palaces gleam with the moonlight that glances from the head of god Çiva, whose statue stands in the outer garden. . . .

9. "A favoring breeze will gently, gently waft thee, and this proud Chātaka bird upon the left doth carol sweetly; the cranes in wreathed curves in the sky, and eager for the mating-time, will wait in attendance upon thee, for thou art the herald of joy. . . .

13. "First hear me tell the path that is to be thy journey, and where on the mountain-tops thou shalt rest thy foot when worn and weary, quaffing the light creamy nectar of the stream, when tired out: afterwards, O Watery Minister, thou shalt hear a message that is fit for thine ears to drink in."

[And in fairest colors of a poet's brush he paints the northward journey of the cloud to the home where the lonely spouse awaits her banished lord's return.]

Translation of A. V. W. Jackson.



KANT

IMMANUEL KANT

(1724–1804)

BY JOSIAH ROYCE

The external events of the life of Immanuel Kant are neither numerous nor startling. He was born in Königsberg in East Prussia, in the year 1724, on the 22d of April. He died in his native place on the 12th of February, 1804. He never traveled beyond about a distance of sixty miles from the city; was never occupied except as scholar, private tutor, university official, and writer. He saw very little of the great world at any time. He was not celebrated, in any national sense, until he was nearly sixty years of age. His personal relations were for the most part, and until his later years, almost as restricted as his material circumstances. He was in all the early part of his life decidedly poor. By dint of very strict economy he acquired a moderate amount of property before his death, but he was never rich. He carefully avoided all roads to purely worldly position or power. Yet by dint of intellectual prowess, fortified by a profound moral earnestness,—although one somewhat coldly austere,—he acquired an influence over the thought, first of his country, and then of Europe, which has been in many ways transforming. Amongst philosophical thinkers he stands in the first rank in the very small group of those philosophers who can be regarded as genuine originators. As an original thinker, in fact, he is the only modern philosopher who can be put beside Plato and Aristotle. Other modern thinkers have represented individual ideas of more or less independence and importance; Kant alone has the honor of having transformed by his work some of the most fundamental tendencies of modern speculation.

Of Kant the man, numerous characterizations have been given by his friends and admirers. Most of these accounts relate especially to his appearance and life in his later years. Of his youth we know much less. On his father's side Kant was of Scottish descent, his grandparents having emigrated from Scotland to East Prussia. Kant's parents were members of the Pietistic party in the Lutheran Church, and Kant's early education was thus under influences decidedly emotional in their religious character,—although the poverty, the hard labor, and the sterling character of his parents prevented the wasting of time in devotional extravagances such as often characterized the Pietistic movement; and the philosopher later looked back upon his early training not only with a deep feeling of devotion, but with a genuine intellectual respect. The family was large. There were three sons and seven daughters. One of Kant's brothers later became a minister. One of the sisters survived the philosopher. But six of the children died young; and Immanuel himself inherited a delicate constitution which had a great deal to do, in later years, both with the sobriety and with the studious contemplativeness of his life's routine. At eight years of age, Kant attended the gymnasium called the Fredericianum, in Königsberg. Here he spent eight years and a half, much under the eye and the influence of the director of the gymnasium, Dr. F. A. Schultz,—Pietist, professor of theology, and pastor. Schultz was a scholarly, independent, and extremely active man,—severe as a disciplinarian, stimulating as a thinker and worker. As Kant himself grew into youth, he formed literary ambitions, showed skill as a Latin writer and reader, but gave no evidences as yet of philosophical tendencies. He was not regarded as an especially promising boy: he is said to have been sensitive; he was certainly weak in body and small in stature. He entered the University in 1740; struggled with poverty and pedantry for about four years; was influenced by the philosophical teaching, especially of Martin Knutzen; and earned some necessary means as private tutor. A familiar anecdote of his university period relates that Kant occasionally was obliged to borrow clothing from his friends while his own was mending; and the story adds that on such occasions the friend might be obliged to stay at home himself. In any case, Kant's university life is described as one of few recreations and of pretty constant labor. Its result was seen at once after graduation, however, in the somewhat ambitious publication with which Kant's literary career opened. This was a study of the then current problem of the theory of kinetic forces,—or «living forces,» as in the terminology of that time the title-page of this essay calls them. The essay was at once philosophical and quasi-mathematical. It was not in any positive sense an important contribution to the discussion; but it was obviously the work of a man in earnest. It was written in a spirit that combined in an attractive way ambition and modesty; and it contained in one passage a somewhat prophetic statement of the course that Kant had laid out for himself.

Kant's mother died in 1737. In 1746 his father followed. The years immediately subsequent to his university course, and to the publication of the foregoing treatise, were passed as private tutor; and it was at the beginning of this period that Kant traveled farthest from his native city. Our philosopher's work as tutor in private families was of considerable advantage for his knowledge of the world, and brought him into contact with somewhat distinguished local magnates. Nine years in all were passed in this occupation.

The year 1755 begins a new and important period of Kant's career. In this year he became tutor, or *privat-docent*, at the University, defended a dissertation upon metaphysics as he took his place in the University, and published a treatise on the 'Natural History and Theory of the Heavens.' In the latter essay he not only showed in various ways the most important features of his earlier methods of work, but had the honor of forestalling Lambert and Laplace in a number of suggestions, which have since become famous, relating to the evolution of the solar system. From this moment dates a long-continued and extremely laborious effort towards self-development. As a university teacher, Kant was singularly successful. His range of lectures was large. Physical science, and especially physical geography, logic, and metaphysics were prominent among his topics. Affiliated at first with the then current highly formal and dogmatic Wolffian philosophy of the universities, Kant was from the outset an essentially independent expositor of doctrine, and soon became more and more an independent thinker. He united the necessarily somewhat pedantic method due to his own early training, with a marvelous humanity of spirit, and much brilliancy of expression as a lecturer. Some of his students listened with great enthusiasm. Herder, who attended his lectures in 1762 and 1763, never forgot, even in the midst of a bitter opposition which years later grew up in his mind towards Kant, the early influence of the master upon him. At the time or near it, the young Herder could hardly use expressions too enthusiastic concerning his master. «Heavenly hours» he names the time spent in such instruction. Kant, he tells us, unites learning and depth in the finest fashion with something resembling «the humor of 'Tristram Shandy.'» He is a profound observer «in the pathology of our mind,» he shows «a creative philosophical imagination,» and has his own Socratic method of bringing everything into relation with man. In æsthetic as in ethical directions Herder finds his teacher equally great. Kant is «altogether a social observer, altogether a finished philosopher, a philosopher of humanity, and in this humane philosophy a German Shaftesbury.»

Some amongst Kant's writings belonging to this period show literary powers which make this enthusiastic characterization more intelligible than the writings of his later period would serve to do. Kant had unquestionably the power to become a popular writer of distinction, if not of extraordinary rank. But he was disposed to sacrifice his literary gifts for the sake of a cause which as the years went by became constantly dearer to him. For worldly distinction he had small desire. University advancement came to him very slowly. Official favor he did not seek. His work as a teacher was always precious to him. But most of all he prized what he once called his mistress, namely Metaphysics. At certain central problems he worked with a constantly increasing devotion and intensity. His own contributions to philosophy became during the years between 1762 and 1766 somewhat numerous: but he himself, even at the time, made comparatively little of them; for he found them fragmentary, and as he himself says, regarded philosophical insight as an ideal whole, in which very little could be accomplished unless that whole were surveyed at a glance. Of his own development during these years, the philosopher himself has given us some indications in notes preserved among his papers. «Of my science,» he says (namely, of philosophy), «I taught at first what most appealed to me. I attempted to make some contributions of my own to the common treasury; in other respects I attempted to correct errors: yet all the while I expected to extend the dogmas of tradition. But when one attempts with real earnestness to find truth, one spares at last not even his own productions. One submits everything that one has learned or has believed to a thorough-going criticism; and so it slowly came to pass that I found my entire dogmatic theory open to fundamental objections.» Later on, Kant declared that he regarded all his metaphysical writings as rendered entirely worthless by his later critical philosophy. Thus unsparingly did the great critic assail his own thought first and most of all. He was even aware that in doing so he deliberately adopted, in his later treatises, a method of exposition that lacked all literary charms. «My method,» he says in notes relating to his later style, «is not very much disposed to enchain the reader or to please him. My writings seem scholastic, dryly contemplative,—yes, even meagre, and far enough from the tone of genius. It seems, to be sure, as if there were nothing more tasteless than metaphysics; but the jewels that are beauty's adornment lay once in dark mines, or at least were seen only in the dim workshop of the artist.»

The fruits of Kant's long labors ripened first in the year 1781, when he published his ‹Critique of Pure Reason,› the most famous philosophical treatise of the last two centuries. This theoretical treatise was followed by a more popular exposition of a portion of the doctrine of the ‹Critique› itself in 1783. To this more popular exposition, which also contained extensive replies to critics, Kant gave the name of ‹Prolegomena to Every Future Metaphysic.› In 1785 and 1788 he published works bearing on his ethical doctrine; in 1790 a philosophical treatise upon æsthetics, and upon the presence of design in nature; in 1793 appeared an ‹Essay upon the Philosophy of

Religion.' During the years between 1781 and 1795 Kant also printed a large number of philosophical papers upon various subjects, ethical, historical, and polemical. The long period of preparation had thus given place to a time of great philosophical activity; but after 1795 the now aged philosopher began to feel the effects of his always delicate constitution with rapidly increasing severity. He grew unable to follow the current discussions which his own writings had by this time provoked. He planned a large philosophical work which was to set the crown upon his systematic labors; but he was unable to give this treatise any final form. His last few years were beset with increasing physical infirmity and mental ineffectiveness, although he preserved to the last his high moral courage and his rigid self-control. At the end he wasted away, and died of marasmus in 1804.

In person Kant was small and spare, weak of muscle, and scarcely five feet high. His cheeks were sunken, his cheek-bones high, his chest was small; his shoulders were slightly deformed. His forehead was high, narrow at the base and broad at the top. His head was decidedly large in proportion to the rest of his body; and the capacity of his skull, as measured in 1880 (when his remains were transferred to a chapel raised in his honor), was declared to be uncommonly great. The physical details here given are found in much fuller statement in the excellent life of Kant by Dr. Stuckenberg, published by Macmillan in 1882. The physical habits of Kant have been often described in works of literary gossip. What especially attracts attention is that rigid regularity of routine which was determined by the philosopher's sensitive health. His constitution was intolerant of medicine; and he early learned that he could combat his numerous minor infirmities only by careful diet, by mental self-control (in which he acquired great skill), and by strict habit of life. His care extended to his breathing, in an almost Oriental fashion. He cured his pains, on occasions, by control over his attention; and by the same means worked successfully against sleeplessness. He was troubled with defective vision; and in general he narrowly escaped hypochondriac tendencies by virtue of a genuinely wholesome cheerfulness of intellectual temper. In intellectual matters themselves Kant was always characterized by an extraordinary power of thoughtful analysis; by a strenuous disposition to pursue, without haste and without rest, any line of inquiry which had once engaged his attention; by keen suspicion of all his instincts and acquired presuppositions; and by a somewhat fatalistic willingness to wait as long as might be necessary for light. No thinker ever had originality more obviously thrust upon him by the situation, and by his unwearied devotion to his task. From the outset, indeed, he had a sense that his work was destined to have important results; but this sense was something very far different from vanity, and was accompanied by none of that personal longing for brilliancy and originality which has determined for good or for ill the life work of so many literary men and thinkers. Not naturally an iconoclast, Kant was driven by his problems to become one of the most revolutionary of thinkers. Not naturally an enthusiast, he was led to results which furnished the principal philosophical food for the most romantic and emotional age of modern German literature. Devoted at the outset to the careful exposition of doctrines which he had accepted from tradition, Kant was led by the purely inner and normal development of his work to views extraordinarily independent.

The process of his thought constitutes as it were one long and connected nature process, working with the fatal necessity of the ebb and flow of the tide, and is as independent of his personal caprices as of the merely popular tendencies of the period in which he grew up. Yet when Frederick Schlegel later classed the thinkers of pure reason with the French Revolution, as one of the characteristic processes of the century, he expressed a view which the student of intellectual life can well appreciate and easily defend. But the expression suggests not alone the importance of the critical philosophy, but also its character as a sort of natural development of the whole intellectual situation of that age.

Morally speaking, Kant was characterized by three features. Of these the first is his relatively cool intellectual attitude towards all problems. He has no sympathy with romantic tendencies; although later many a romantic soul came to sympathize profoundly with him. He is opposed to mysticism of every form; and not so much suspects the emotions of human nature, as clearly sees what he takes to be their essential and fundamental capriciousness. The second trait is a thorough regard for lawfulness of action. Reasonable guidance is for him the only possible guidance. Emotions must deceive; the plan of life is as plan alone worthy of consideration. Kant has small interest in noble sentiments, but very great natural respect for large and connected personal and social undertakings, when guided by ideas. The third characteristic of the philosopher, in this part of his nature, is that sincerely cheerful indifference to fortune which made him, amidst all his frequently keen criticism of the weakness of human nature and of the vanities of life, withal a critic who just escapes pessimism by dint of his assurance that, after all, reason must triumph in the universe. Kant was a fine observer of human nature, and as such was fond of lecturing on what we might call the comparative psychology of national and social types. He was widely read in the anthropological literature of his day. Accordingly, his observations on man's moral nature, in his lectures as in his published treatises, often show the breadth of reading and the humane shrewdness of judgment which were the source of the charm that the young Herder so richly found in his teaching. Yet Kant's accounts of human nature, without being cynical, always appear somewhat coldly disillusioned. What saves this aspect of his work from seeming cynical is the genuine tone of moral seriousness with which he views the more rational aspects of human tasks. In one passage of his lectures on psychology, in connection with the theory of pleasure and pain, he briefly sums up his view of the happiness possible to any mortal man. This view at first sight is somewhat uninviting. From the nature of the case, Kant reasons, every pleasure has to be attended with a corresponding experience of pain. Life in general seems to be naturally something of a burden. Moreover, every human desire has by nature other desires opposing it. Our tendencies, as they naturally are, are profoundly deceitful. Yet despite all this, Kant asserts that life has its very deep comforts. But what are these? Kant replies:—«The deepest and easiest means of quieting all pains is the thought that a reasonable man should be expected to have at his control,—namely, the thought that life in general, so far as the enjoyment of it goes, has no genuine worth at all; for enjoyment depends upon fortune: but its worth consists alone in the use of life, in the purposes to which it is directed. And this aspect of life comes to man not by fortune, but only through wisdom. This consequently is in man's power. Whoever is much troubled about losing life will never enjoy life.»

These three traits of Kant's moral attitude towards life unite to give some of his more mature historical essays and critical studies a character which deserves to be better known than it now is, by students who are less interested in the metaphysical aspect of his doctrine. In judging the course of human history, Kant sometimes seems to be accepting the doctrine of Hobbes, that by nature all men are at war with all. In fact, however, Kant sees deeper. The situation has another aspect. The warfare is still fundamental. Every man is at war not only with his fellows, but by nature with himself. He desires freedom, but he desires also power. Power he can get only through social subordination. This, man more or less feels from the outset. His need of his fellow-man is as prominent in his own mind as is his disposition to war with his fellow. Kant accordingly speaks of man as a being «who cannot endure his fellow-man, and cannot possibly do without him.» Thus there is that in man which wars against the very warfare itself; and Kant's general psychological theory of the inner opposition and division of the natural man comes to appear somewhat like the Pauline doctrine of the Epistle to the Romans. But Nature's chaos is Reason's opportunity.

It is upon this very basis that Kant founds his ethical theory; according to which the moral law can find in our natures no possible basis except the fundamental and supreme demand of the Pure Reason, that this universal but obviously senseless conflict shall cease through voluntary subordination to what Kant calls the Categorical Imperative. The Categorical Imperative is the principle of consistency in conduct; stated abstractly, the principle, So act at any time that you could will the maxim of your act to become a universal law for all reasonable beings. This maxim a man can obey; because he is not merely a creature with this nature, so capricious and so inwardly divided against itself, but a rational being with free-will, capable of subordinating caprice to reason. The whole moral law is thus summed up in the maxim, Act now as if your act determined the deed of every man for all time; or more simply, Act upon absolutely consistent principles. And now, in the course of history, Kant sees the progressive process of the realization of this one universal principle of the reason, in the organization of a rational human society.

Kant's true originality as a thinker lies most in his theoretical philosophy. Of this in the present place it is impossible to give any really significant account. If one must sum up in the fewest words the most general idea of this doctrine, one is disposed to say: Kant found philosophical thought concerned with the problem, how human knowledge is related to the real world of truth. This problem had assumed its then customary shape in connection with discussions both of traditional theology and of science. What we now call the conflict of religion and science really turned for that age, as for ours, upon the definition and the solution of this fundamental problem of the scope and the limits of knowledge. But what philosophers up to Kant's time had not questioned, was that *if* human knowledge in any region, as for instance in the region of natural science, has validity,— accomplishes what it means to accomplish,— then this validity and this success must involve a real acquaintance with the world absolutely real, beyond the boundaries of human experience. Thus materialistic philosophy had maintained that if natural science is valid, man knows a world of absolutely real matter, which explains all things and is the ultimate truth. Theological doctrine had held in a similar way that if the human reason is valid at all, then the absolute nature of God, of the soul, or of some other transcendent truth, must in some respect be within our range. Now Kant undertook, by virtue of a new analysis of human knowledge, to prove, on one hand, that human reason cannot know absolute truth of any kind except moral truth. Herein, to be sure, his doctrine seemed at one with those skeptical views which had questioned in former times the validity of human knowledge altogether. But Kant did not agree with the skeptics as to their result. On the other hand, he maintained that the real success and the genuine validity of human science depend upon the very fact that we are not able to know, in theoretical realms, any absolute or transcendent truth whatsoever. For, as Kant asserts, in dealing with nature as science knows nature, we are really dealing with the laws of human experience as such, and not with any absolute or transcendent truth whatever. It is however the nature of the human understanding, the constitution of human experience, that is expressed in all natural laws that we are able to discover; in all the truth that science maintains or that the future can disclose. Thus, as Kant states the case, it is the understanding that gives laws to nature. And the limitation of knowledge to the realm of experience, and our failure to be able to know in theoretical terms any transcendent truth, are not signs of the failure of human knowledge in its essential human purposes, but are conditions upon which depends the very validity of our knowledge within its own realm. In trying to know more than the world of experience, we try an experiment which, if successful, could only end in making all knowledge impossible. Space, time, such fundamental ideas as the idea of causality,—all these are facts which represent no fundamental truth beyond experience whatever. They are facts determined solely by the facts of human nature. They hold within our range, and not beyond it. Of things in themselves we know nothing. But on this very ignorance, Kant maintains, is founded not only the validity of our natural sciences, but the possibility of retaining, against the assaults of materialism and of a purely negative skepticism, the validity of our moral consciousness and the essential spirit of religious faith. In this unique combination of critical skepticism, of moral idealism, and of a rationalistic assurance of the validity for all men of the *a priori* principles upon which natural science rests, lies the essential significance of the philosophy of Kant,—a significance which only a much fuller exposition, and a study of the history of thought, could make explicit.

Josiah Royce.

A COMPARISON OF THE BEAUTIFUL WITH THE PLEASANT AND THE GOOD

From ‹The Critique of Judgment›

As regards the Pleasant every one is content that his judgment, which he bases upon private feeling, and by which he says of an object that it pleases him, should be limited merely to his own person. Thus he is quite contented that if he says, «Canary wine is pleasant,» another man may correct his expression and remind him that he ought to say, «It is pleasant *to me.*» And this is the case not only as regards the taste of the tongue, the palate, and the throat, but for whatever is pleasant to any one's eyes and ears. To one, violet color is soft and lovely; to another, it is washed out and dead. One man likes the tone of wind instruments, another that of strings. To strive here with the design of reproving as incorrect another man's judgment which is different from our own, as if the judgments were logically opposed, would be folly. As regards the Pleasant, therefore, the fundamental proposition is valid: *Every one has his own taste*,—the taste of Sense.

The case is quite different with the Beautiful. It would on the contrary be laughable if a man who imagined anything to his own taste, thought to justify himself by saying, «This object [the house we see, the coat that person wears, the concert we hear, the poem submitted to our judgment] is beautiful *for me.*» For he must not call it *beautiful* if it merely pleases him. Many things may have for him charm and pleasantness; no one troubles himself at that: but if he gives out anything as beautiful, he supposes in others the same satisfaction; he judges not merely for himself, but for every one, and speaks of beauty as if it were a property of things. Hence he says, «The *thing* is beautiful;» and he does not count on the agreement of others with this his judgment of satisfaction, because he has found this agreement several times before, but he *demands* it of them. He blames them if they judge otherwise; and he denies them taste, which he nevertheless requires from them. Here then we cannot say that each man has his own particular taste. For this would be as much as to say that there is no taste whatever; *i. e.*, no æsthetical judgment which can make a rightful claim upon every one's assent.

At the same time we find as regards the Pleasant that there is an agreement among men in their judgments upon it, in regard to which we deny taste to some and attribute it to others; by this not meaning one of our organic senses, but a faculty of judging in respect of the Pleasant generally. Thus we say of a man who knows how to entertain his guests with pleasures of enjoyment for all the senses, so that they are all pleased, «He has taste.» But here the universality is only taken comparatively: and there emerge rules which are only *general*, like all empirical ones, and not *universal;* which latter the judgment of Taste upon the Beautiful undertakes or lays claim to. It is a judgment in reference to sociability, so far as this rests on empirical rules. In respect to the Good it is true that judgments make rightful claim to validity for every one; but the Good is represented only *by means of a concept* as the object of a universal satisfaction, which is the case neither with the Pleasant nor with the Beautiful.

This particular determination of the universality of an æsthetical judgment, which is to be met with in a judgment of taste, is noteworthy, not indeed for the logician, but for the transcendental philosopher. It requires no small trouble to discover its origin; but we thus detect a property of our cognitive faculty which without this analysis would remain unknown.

First we must be fully convinced of the fact that in a judgment of taste about the Beautiful, the satisfaction in the object is imputed to *every one*,—without being based on a concept, for then it would be the Good. Further, this claim to universal validity so essentially belongs to a judgment by which we describe anything as *beautiful*, that if this were not thought in it, it would never come into our thoughts to use the expression at all, but everything which pleases without a concept would be counted as pleasant. In respect of the latter, every one has his own opinion; and no one assumes in another, agreement with his judgment of taste, which is always the case in a judgment of taste about beauty.

He who fears can form no judgment about the Sublime in nature; just as he who is seduced by inclination and appetite can form no judgment about the Beautiful. The former flies from the sight of an object which inspires him with awe; and it is impossible to find satisfaction in a terror that is seriously felt. Hence the pleasurableness arising from the cessation of an uneasiness is *a state of joy*. But this, on account of the deliverance from danger which is involved, is a state of joy when conjoined with the resolve that we shall no more be exposed to the danger; we cannot willingly look back upon our sensations of danger, much less seek the occasion for them again.

Bold, overhanging, and as it were threatening, rocks; clouds piled up in the sky, moving with lightning flashes and thunder peals; volcanoes in all their violence of destruction; hurricanes with their track of devastation; the boundless ocean in a state of tumult; the lofty waterfall of a mighty river; and such like,—these exhibit our faculty of resistance as insignificantly small in comparison with their might. But the sight of them is the more attractive, the more fearful it is, provided only that we are in security; and we willingly call these objects sublime, because they raise the energies of the soul above their accustomed height, and discover in us a faculty of resistance of a quite different kind, which gives us courage to measure ourselves against the apparent almightiness of nature.

Now, in the immensity of nature, and in the insufficiency of our faculties to take in a standard proportionate to the æsthetical estimation of the magnitude of its *realm*, we find our own limitation; although at the same time in our rational faculty we find a different, non-sensuous standard, which has that infinity itself under it as a unity, in comparison with which everything in nature is small, and thus in our mind we find a superiority to nature even in its immensity. And so also the irresistibility of its might, while making us recognize our own physical impotence, considered as beings of nature, discloses to us a faculty of judging independently of, and a superiority over, nature; on which is based a kind of self-preservation, entirely different from that which can be attacked and brought into danger by external nature. Thus humanity in our person remains unhumiliated, though the individual might have to submit to this dominion. In this way nature is not judged to be sublime in our æsthetical judgments in so far as it excites fear; but because it calls up that power in us, which is not nature, of regarding as small the things about which we are solicitous (goods, health, and life), and of regarding its might, to which we are no doubt subjected in respect of these things, as nevertheless without any dominion over us and our personality, to which we must bow where our highest fundamental propositions, and their assertion or abandonment, are concerned. Therefore nature is here called sublime merely because it elevates the imagination to a presentation of those cases in which the mind can make felt the proper sublimity of its destination, in comparison with nature itself.

This estimation of ourselves loses nothing through the fact that we must regard ourselves as safe in order to feel this inspiriting satisfaction; and that hence, as there is no seriousness in the danger, there might be also (as might seem to be the case) just as little seriousness in the sublimity of our spiritual faculty. For the satisfaction here concerns only the *destination* of our faculty which discloses itself in such a case, so far as the tendency to this destination lies in our nature, whilst its development and exercise remain incumbent and obligatory. And in this there is truth and reality, however conscious the man may be of his present actual powerlessness when he turns his reflection to it.

No doubt this principle seems to be too far-fetched and too subtly reasoned, and consequently seems to go beyond the scope of an æsthetical judgment; but observation of men proves the opposite, and shows that it may lie at the root of the most ordinary judgments, although we are not always conscious of it. For what is that which is, even to the savage, an object of the greatest admiration? It is a man who shrinks from nothing, who fears nothing, and therefore does not yield to danger, but rather goes to face it vigorously with the most complete deliberation. Even in the most highly civilized state this peculiar veneration for the soldier remains, though only under the condition that he exhibit all the virtues of peace, gentleness, compassion, and even a becoming care for his own person; because even by these it is recognized that his mind is unsubdued by danger. Hence whatever disputes there may be about the superiority of the respect which is to be accorded them, in the comparison of a statesman and a general, the æsthetical judgment decides for the latter. War itself, if it is carried on with order and with a sacred respect for the rights of citizens, has something sublime in it, and makes the disposition of the people who carry it on thus, only the more sublime, the more numerous are the dangers to which they are exposed, and in respect of which they behave with courage. On the other hand, a long peace generally brings about a predominant commercial spirit, and along with it, low selfishness, cowardice, and effeminacy; and debases the disposition of the people.

It appears to conflict with this solution of the concept of the sublime, so far as sublimity is ascribed to might, that we are accustomed to represent God as presenting himself in his wrath and yet in his sublimity, in the tempest, the storm, the earthquake, etc.; and that it would be foolish and criminal to imagine a superiority of our minds over these works of his, and as it seems, even over the designs of such might. Hence it would appear that no feeling of the sublimity of our own nature, but rather subjection, abasement, and a feeling of complete powerlessness, is a fitting state of mind in the presence of such an object; and this is generally bound up with the idea of it during natural phenomena of this kind. In religion in general, prostration, adoration with bent head, with contrite, anxious demeanor and voice, seems to be the only fitting behavior in presence of the Godhead; and hence most peoples have adopted and still observe it. But this state of mind is far from being necessarily bound up with the idea of the *sublimity* of a religion and its object. The man who is actually afraid, because he finds reasons for fear in himself, whilst conscious by his culpable disposition of offending against a Might whose will is irresistible and at the same time just, is not in the frame of mind for admiring the Divine greatness. For this a mood of calm contemplation and a quite free judgment are needed. Only if he is conscious of an upright disposition pleasing to God, do those operations of might serve to awaken in him the idea of the sublimity of this Being, for then he recognizes in himself a sublimity of disposition conformable to his will; and thus he is raised above the fear of such operations of nature, which he no longer regards as outbursts of His wrath. Even humility, in the shape of a stern judgment upon his own faults,—which otherwise, with a consciousness of good intentions, could be easily palliated from the frailty of human nature,—is a sublime state of mind, consisting in a voluntary subjection of himself to the pain of remorse, in order that the causes of this may be gradually removed. In this way religion is essentially distinguished from superstition. The latter establishes in the mind, not reverence for the sublime, but fear and apprehension of the all-powerful Being to whose will the terrified man sees himself subject, without according him any high esteem. From this nothing can arise but a seeking of favor and flattery, instead of a religion which consists in a good life.

Sublimity therefore does not reside in anything of nature, but only in our mind, in so far as we can become conscious that we are superior to nature within, and therefore also to nature without us, so far as it influences us. Everything that excites this feeling in us,—*e. g.*, the *might* of nature which calls forth our forces,—is called then, although improperly, sublime. Only by supposing this idea in ourselves, and in reference to it, are we capable of attaining to the idea of the sublimity of that Being which produces respect in us, not merely by the might that it displays in nature, but rather by means of the faculty which resides in us of judging it fearlessly and of regarding our destination as sublime in respect of it.

Translation of J. H. Bernard.

OF REASON IN GENERAL

From ‹The Critique of Pure Reason›

All our knowledge begins with the senses, proceeds thence to the understanding, and ends with reason. There is nothing higher than reason, for working up the material of intuition and comprehending it under the highest unity of thought. As it here becomes necessary to give a definition of that highest faculty of knowledge, I begin to feel considerable misgivings. There is of reason, as there is of the understanding, a purely formal—that is, logical—use, in which no account is taken of the contents of knowledge; but there is also a real use, in so far as reason itself contains the origin of certain concepts and principles, which it has not borrowed either from the senses or from the understanding. The former faculty has been long defined by logicians as the faculty of mediate conclusions, in contradistinction to immediate ones (*consequentiæ immediatæ*); but this does not help us to understand the latter, which itself produces concepts. As this brings us face to face with the division of reason into a logical and a transcendental faculty, we must look for a higher concept for this source of knowledge, to comprehend both concepts; though, according to the analogy of the concepts of the understanding, we may expect that the logical concept will give us the key to the transcendental, and that the table of the functions of the former will give us the genealogical outline of the concepts of reason.

In the first part of our transcendental logic we defined the understanding as the *faculty of rules;* and we now distinguish reason from it by calling it the *faculty of principles.*

The term "principle" is ambiguous, and signifies commonly some kind of knowledge only that may be used as a principle; though in itself, and according to its origin, it is no principle at all. Every general proposition, even though it may have been derived from experience by induction, may serve as a major in a syllogism of reason; but it is not on that account a principle. Mathematical axioms — as for instance, that between two points there can be only one straight line — constitute even general knowledge *a priori;* and may therefore, with reference to the cases which can be brought under them, rightly be called principles. Nevertheless it would be wrong to say that this property of a straight line, in general and by itself, is known to us from principles, for it is known from pure intuition only.

I shall therefore call it knowledge from principles, whenever we know the particular in the general by means of concepts. Thus every syllogism of reason is a form of deducing some kind of knowledge from a principle; because the major always contains a concept which enables us to know, according to a principle, everything that can be comprehended under the conditions of that concept. As every general knowledge may serve as a major in such a syllogism, and as the understanding supplies such general propositions *a priori*, these no doubt may, with reference to their possible use, be called principles.

But if we consider these principles of the pure understanding in themselves, and according to their origin, we find that they are anything rather than knowledge from concepts. They would not even be possible *a priori*, unless we relied on pure intuition (in mathematics) or on conditions of a possible experience in general. That everything which happens has a cause, can by no means be concluded from the concept of that which happens; on the contrary, that very principle shows in what manner alone we can form a definite empirical concept of that which happens.

It is impossible therefore for the understanding to supply us with synthetical knowledge from concepts; and it is really that kind of knowledge which I call principles absolutely; while all general propositions may be called principles relatively.

It is an old desideratum, which at some time however distant may be realized, that instead of the endless variety of civil laws, their principles might be discovered; for thus alone the secret might be found of what is called simplifying legislation. Such laws, however, are only limitations of our freedom under conditions by which it always agrees with itself; they refer to something which is entirely our own work, and of which we ourselves are the cause, by means of these concepts. But that objects in themselves, as for instance material nature, should be subject to principles, and be determined according to mere concepts, is something, if not impossible, at all events extremely contradictory. But be that as it may,—for on this point we have still all investigations before us,—so much at least is clear, that knowledge from principles by itself is something totally different from mere knowledge of the understanding; which in the form of a principle may no doubt precede other knowledge, but which by itself, in so far as it is synthetical, is not based on mere thought, nor contains anything general according to concepts.

If the understanding is a faculty for producing unity among phenomena according to rules, reason is the faculty for producing unity among the rules of the understanding according to principles. Reason therefore never looks directly to experience or to any object, but to the understanding; in order to impart *a priori*, through concepts, to its manifold kinds of knowledge, a unity that may be called the unity of reason, and is very different from the unity which can be produced by the understanding.

This is a general definition of the faculty of reason, so far as it was possible to make it intelligible without the help of illustrations.

Translation of F. Max Müller.

HOW IS METAPHYSICS POSSIBLE AS SCIENCE?

From the ‹Prolegomena›

METAPHYSICS as a natural disposition of the reason is real; but it is also in itself dialectical and deceptive, as was proved in the analytical solution of the third main problem. Hence to attempt to draw our principles from it, and in their employment to follow this natural but none the less fallacious illusion, can never produce science, but only an empty dialectical art; in which one school may indeed outdo the other, but none can ever attain a justifiable and lasting success. In order that as science it may lay claim not merely to deceptive persuasion, but to insight and conviction, a critique of the reason must exhibit in a complete system the whole stock of conceptions *a priori*, arranged according to their different sources,—the sensibility, the understanding, and the reason; it must present a complete table of these conceptions, together with their analysis and all that can be deduced from them, but more especially the possibility of synthetic knowledge *a priori* by means of their deduction, the principles of its use, and finally their boundaries. Thus criticism contains, and it alone contains, the whole plan well tested and approved—indeed, all the means—whereby metaphysics may be perfected as a science; by other ways and means this is impossible. The question now is not, however, how this business is possible, but only how we are to set about it; how good heads are to be turned from their previous mistaken and fruitless path to a non-deceptive treatment; and how such a combination may be best directed towards the common end.

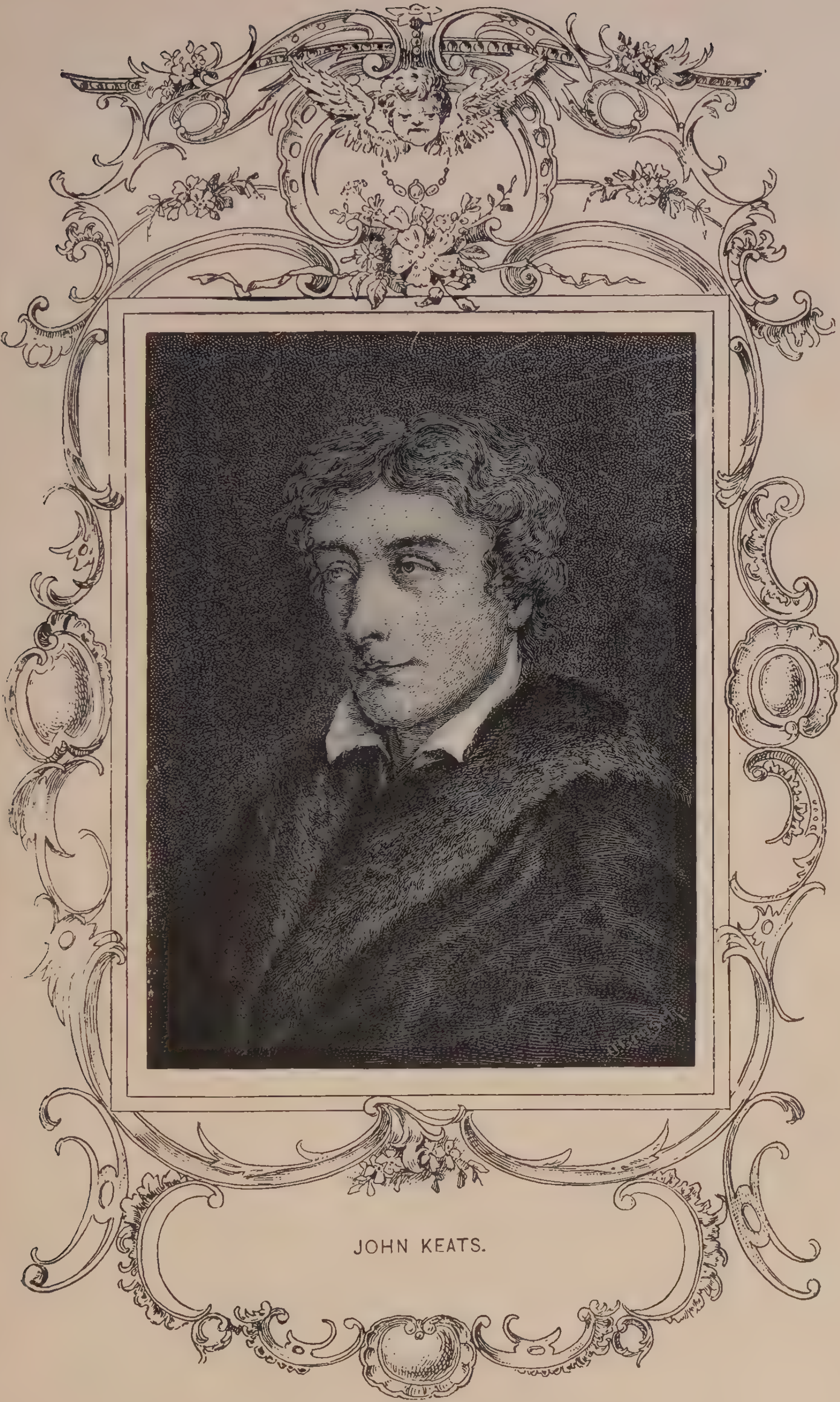
This much is certain: he who has once tried criticism will be sickened forever of all the dogmatic trash he was compelled to content himself with before because his reason, requiring something, could find nothing better for its occupation. Criticism stands to the ordinary school metaphysics exactly in the same relation as *chemistry* to *alchemy*, or as *astronomy* to fortune-telling *astrology*. I guarantee that no one who has comprehended and thought out the conclusions of criticism, even in these 'Prolegomena,' will ever return to the old sophistical pseudo-science. He will rather look forward with a kind of pleasure to a metaphysics, certainly now within his power, which requires no more preparatory discoveries, and which alone can procure for the reason permanent satisfaction. For this is an advantage upon which metaphysics alone can reckon with confidence, among all possible sciences; namely, that it can be brought to completion and to a durable position, as it cannot change any further, nor is it susceptible of any increase through new discoveries: since the reason does not here find the sources of its knowledge in objects and in their intuition, which cannot teach it anything, but in itself; so that when the principles of its possibility are presented completely, and without any misunderstanding, nothing remains for pure reason to know *a priori*, or even with justice to ask. The certain prospect of so definite and perfect a knowledge has a special attraction about it, even if all its uses (of which I shall hereafter speak) be set aside.

All false art, all empty wisdom, lasts its time; but it destroys itself in the end, and its highest cultivation is at the same time the moment of its decline. That as regards metaphysics this time has now come, is proved by the state to which it has declined among all cultivated nations, notwithstanding the zeal with which every other kind of science is being worked out. The old arrangement of the university studies preserves its outlines still; a single academy of sciences bestirs itself now and then, by holding out prizes, to induce another attempt to be made therein: but it is no longer counted among fundamental sciences; and any one may judge for himself how an intellectually gifted man to whom the term « great metaphysician » were applied, would take this well-meant, but scarcely by any one coveted, compliment.

But although the period of the decline of all dogmatic metaphysics is undoubtedly come, there are many things wanting to enable us to say that the time of its re-birth by means of a thorough and complete critique of the reason has already appeared. All transitional phases from one tendency to its opposite pass through the state of indifference; and this moment is the most dangerous for an author, but as it seems to me the most favorable for the science. For when, through the complete dissolution of previous combinations, party spirit is extinguished, men's minds are in the best mood for listening gradually to proposals for a combination on another plan. If I say that I hope that these ‹ Prolegomena › will perhaps make research in the field of criticism more active, and will offer to the general spirit of philosophy, which seems to be wanting in nourishment on its speculative side, a new and very promising field for its occupation, I can already foresee that every one who has trodden unwillingly and with vexation the thorny way I have led him in the ‹ Critique › will ask me on what I ground this hope. I answer, *On the irresistible law of necessity.*

That the spirit of man will ever wholly give up metaphysical investigations, is just as little to be expected as that in order not always to be breathing bad air we should stop breathing altogether. Metaphysics will always exist in the world, then; and what is more, exist with every one, but more especially with reflecting men, who in default of a public standard will each fashion it in his own way. Now, what has hitherto been termed metaphysics can satisfy no acute mind; but to renounce it entirely is impossible: hence a critique of the pure reason itself must be at last *attempted*, and when obtained must be *investigated* and subjected to a universal test; because otherwise there are no means of relieving this pressing requirement, which means something more than mere thirst for knowledge.

Translation of Ernest Belford Bax.



JOHN KEATS.

JOHN KEATS

(1795-1821)

BY LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY

NEARLY all people who read poetry have a favoritism for Keats; he is in many respects the popular hero of English literature. He was young, and chivalrously devoted to his art; he has a mastery of expression almost unparalleled; he is neither obscure nor polemic; and he has had from the first a most fecundating influence on other minds: in Hood, in Tennyson, in Rossetti and Matthew Arnold, in Lanier and Lowell, in Yeats and Watson, one feels the breath and touch of Keats like an incantation. It is a test of the truly original genius that it shall stand in line with the past and the future of its race; that it shall be essentially filial and paternal. Newman says somewhere in his ever lucid manner: «Good is not only good, but reproductive of good; this is one of its attributes; nothing is excellent, beautiful, perfect, desirable, for its own sake, but it overflows, and spreads the likeness of itself all around it. . . . A great good will impart great good.» And as he might have added, it will have derived it. Keats first woke and knew himself reading Spenser's world of faëry, where abstract harmonies wander,

> «And the gloom divine is all around,
> And underneath is the mossy ground.»

That was really his opening event. His outer story is soon told. Let it count as it can that Keats was of commonplace stock, born on the 31st of October, 1795, early orphaned, having a small competence wasted prematurely through the fault of others; that he had careful schooling in his boyhood, and kind friends then and famous friends after to spur him on to achieve his best, never having set foot in a university save as a passing guest; that he was apprenticed to a country surgeon, and got absorbed, little by little and with exclusive passion, in literature; that he was small in person, but muscularly made, with a head and face of alert and serious beauty; and that his behavior in all the relations of life was cheerful, disinterested, modest, honorable, kind; that his health broke,—but not because of his anxieties, of which a fevered love-affair was chief,—and that he died in exile at Rome on the 23d of February, 1821, aged five-and-twenty, uncertain of the fate of his third and last book, in which lay his whole gathered force, his brave bid for human remembrance.

Keats's early attempts were certainly over-colored. 'Endymion,' despite its soft graces and two enchanting lyric interludes, is a disquieting performance. Yet it turned out to be, as he knew, a rock under his feet whence he could make a progress, and not a quicksand which he had to abandon in order to be saved. Like Mozart's or Raphael's, his work is singularly of a piece. His ambition in his novice days was great and conscious: "I that am ever all athirst for glory!" he cries in a sonnet composed in 1817. Everything he wrote was for a while embroidered and interrupted with manifold invocations to his Muse, or melodiously irrelevant remarks concerning his own unworthiness and pious intentions. And there is nothing finer in the history of English letters than his growth, by self-criticism, from these molluscous moods into the perception and interpretation of objective beauty. His dominant qualities, bad and good, exist from the first, and all along: they seem never to have moved from their own ground. But they undergo the most lovely transformations; in his own Hebraic phrase, they "die into life," into the perfected splendor of the Keats we know. He embraced discipline. Knowing no Greek (it was part of Shelley's generous plan, when both were unwittingly so near the grave, to "keep Keats's body warm, and teach him Greek and Spanish"), the little London poet turned loyally to Greek ideals: the most unlikely loadstones, one would think, for his opulent and inebriate imagination. Towards these ideals, and not only towards the entrancing mythologies extern to them, he toiled. Recognizing the richness and redundance of his rebellious fancy, he therefore set before himself truth, and the calm report of it; height and largeness; severity, and poise, and restraint. The processes are perceptible alike in lyric, narrative, and sonnet, taken in the lump and chronologically; the amazing result is plain at last in the recast and unfinished 'Hyperion,' and in the incomparable volume of 1820, containing 'Lamia,' 'Isabella,' 'The Eve of Saint Agnes,' and the Odes. It is as if a dweller in the fen country should elect to build upon Jura. This may be the award of a vocation and a concentrated mind, or even the happy instinct of genius. It betokens, no less, sovereignty of another sort. "Keats had flint and iron in him," says Mr. Matthew Arnold; "he had character." Even as the gods gave him his natural life of the intellect, he matched them at their own game; for he earned his immortality.

Now, what is the outstanding extraneous feature of Keats's poetry? It is perhaps the musical and sculptural effect which he can make with words: a necromancy which he exercises with hardly a rival, even "among the greatest"; and among these he justly hoped to stand. Observe that a facility of this sort cannot be a natural endowment, since we must still, as Sir Philip Sidney bewails, «be put to school to learn our mother-tongue»; and that it implies ascetic diligence in the artist compassing it. Moreover, Keats's craftsmanship is no menace to him. It is true that he carries, in general, no such hindering burden of thought along his lyre as Donne, Dryden, Wordsworth, Browning; but neither, once having learned his strength, does he ever fall into the mere teasing ecstasy of symbolic sound, as Shelley does often, as Swinburne does more often than not. Keats, unlike Shelley or a cherub, is not all wing; he «stands foursquare» when he wills, or moves like the men of the Parthenon frieze, with a health and joyous gravity entirely carnal. The most remarkable of all his powers is this power of deliciously presenting the inconceivable, without strain or fantasticality, so that it takes rank at once among laws which any one might have seen and said — laws necessary to man in his higher moods. Neither Virgil, nor Dante, nor Milton,— although he touches deep truths, and Keats only their beautiful analogies,— has a more illumining habit of speech. Mr. Bradford Torrey, in a recent essay in the Atlantic Monthly, cited, as master instances of «verbal magic» in English, a passage from Shakespeare, another from Wordsworth, which have long had the profound admiration of feeling hearts. These are —

«— boughs that shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang,»

and again —

«— old unhappy far-off things,
And battles long ago.»

The condition of the best «magic» is surely that it shall be unaccountable; but the magnificent lines just cited are not at all so,— at least fundamentally, to any acquainted with what may be called their historic context. Shakespeare eyeing the melancholy winter trees as he writes his sonnet, and sympathetically conscious of the glorious abbey churches newly dismantled on every side, unroofed, emptied, discolored, their choral voices hushed; Wordsworth conjecturing the matter of his Scots girl-gleaner's song to have been (as indeed it must have been, caught from her aged grandsire's lips at home!) a memory of the Forty-five, an echo of the romantic Jacobite insurrection, enough in itself to inspire poets forever; — these are but transmuting their every-day tradition and impression into literature. But the «younger brother» is not so to be tracked; when we come to the finest definite images of his pages, such as

«Magic casements opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faëry lands forlorn,»

we feel that he lived in Illyria, rather than in the capital of his Sacred Majesty George the Fourth. Some conception which defies genesis is under his every stanza; word on word is wrought of miracles. Yet the whole is fragrant of obedience, temperance, labor. This it is which makes the art of Keats a very heartening spectacle, over and above its extreme solace and charm; and his own clan will always be his most vehement adorers, because they, better than any, have insight into his heroic temper.

Time, accumulatively wise with the imparted second thoughts of all men of genius, has not failed to make huge excisions in Keats's dramatic, satiric, and amatory work; and to name the earliest and the latest verses among utterances forgivably imperfect. But striking away from Keats's fame all which refuses to cohere, leaves large to the eye what a noble and endearing shrine of song! Far more effectually than any other at our command, the lad John Keats, being but heard and seen, bears in upon the docile intelligence what is meant by pure poesy; the most elemental and tangible, as well as the most occult and uncatalogueable (if one may coin so fierce a word!) of mortal pleasures. Although he must always call forth personal love and reverence, his value is unmistakably super-personal. Keats is the Celt, the standard-bearer of revealed beauty, among the English, and carries her colors triumphantly into our actual air.

Louise Imogen Guiney.

FROM ‹THE EVE OF ST. AGNES›

St. Agnes's Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold;
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seemed taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel isle by slow degrees;
The sculptured dead, on each side, seem to freeze,

Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails.
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails. . . .

A casement high and triple-arched there was,
All garlanded with carven imageries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seemed a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven;—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint. . . .

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppressed
Her soothèd limbs, and soul fatigued away:
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully havened both from joy and pain;
Clasped like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again. . . .

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanchèd linen, smooth and lavendered,
While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez; and spicèd dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon. . . .

She hurried at his words, beset with fear,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spear;
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found. —
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide like phantoms into the wide hall;
Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide,
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side;
The wakeful bloodhound rose and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns;
By one and one the bolts full easy slide;
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

FROM ‹ENDYMION›

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever;
Its loveliness increases: it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:

An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.
Nor do we merely feel these essences
For one short hour; no, even as the trees
That whisper round a temple become soon
Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
The passion poesy, glories infinite,
Haunt us till they become a cheering light
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,
They always must be with us, or we die.

FROM ‹HYPERION›

Deep in the shady sadness of a vale,
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
Sat gray-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair.
Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. . . .
Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went,
No further than to where his feet had strayed,
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,
Unsceptred; and his realmless eyes were closed;
While his bowed head seemed listening to the Earth,
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.
It seemed no force could wake him from his place
But there came one who with a kindred hand
Touched his wide shoulders, after bending low
With reverence, though to one who knew it not.
She was a goddess of the infant world. . . .
Her face was large as that of Memphian Sphinx,
Pedestaled haply in a palace court,
When sages looked to Egypt for their lore.
But oh! how unlike marble was that face:
How beautiful, if sorrow had not made
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.
There was a listening fear in her regard,
As if calamity had but begun;
As if the vanward clouds of evil days
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear
Was with its storèd thunder laboring up.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

Oh for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
Oh for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth:
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim;

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,—
The weariness, the fever, and the fret,
Here where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
   Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
   Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
   White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
      Fast fading violets covered up in leaves;
         And mid-May's eldest child,
   The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
      The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
   I have been half in love with easeful Death,—
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
   To take into the air my quiet breath,—
Now more than ever seems it rich to die;
   To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
      While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
         In such an ecstasy!
   Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
      To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
   No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
   In ancient days by emperor and clown;
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
   Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
      She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
         The same that ofttimes hath
   Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
      Of perilous seas, in faëry lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
   To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
   As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
   Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
      Up the hillside; and now 'tis buried deep
         In the next valley-glades:
   Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
      Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

THOU still unravished bride of quietness!
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time!
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet do not grieve:
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss;
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
«Beauty is truth, truth beauty,»—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

FANCY

Ever let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home;
At a touch sweet pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth:
Then let wingèd Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: what do then?
Sit thee by the ingle when
The sear fagot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the cakèd snow is shuffled
From the plowboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overawed,
Fancy, high commissioned: send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring in spite of frost
Beauties that the earth had lost;

She will bring thee, altogether,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heapèd Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth;
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it: thou shalt hear
Distant harvest carols clear;
Rustle of the reapèd corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And in the same moment—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt at one glance behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf and every flower
Pearlèd with the self-same shower
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its cellèd sleep;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing.

O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Everything is spoilt by use:
Quickly break her prison-string
And such joys as these she'll bring.—
Let the wingèd Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home.

TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twinèd flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,*
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful, a faëry's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faëry's song.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone:
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
«I love thee true.»

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed and sighèd deep,
And there I shut her wild sad eyes—
So kissed to sleep.

And there we slumbered on the moss,
And there I dreamed—ah! woe betide—

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* In the version by Lord Houghton of this poem, this line and its repetition in the second stanza run, «Oh, what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!» and that form of the line is often met, with other changes

The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hillside.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cry'd—"La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starved lips in the gloom
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hillside.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

SONNET

On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

Much have I traveled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly States and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

SONNET

On Seeing the Elgin Marbles

My spirit is too weak: mortality
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep;
And each imagined pinnacle and steep
Of godlike hardship, tells me I must die,
Like a sick eagle looking at the sky.
Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep

That I have not the cloudy winds to keep,
Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.
Such dim-conceivèd glories of the brain
Bring round the heart an undescribable feud;
So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,
That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude
Wasting of old Time — with a billowy main —
A sun — a shadow of a magnitude.

SONNET

WRITTEN ON A BLANK PAGE IN SHAKESPEARE'S POEMS, FACING 'A LOVER'S COMPLAINT'

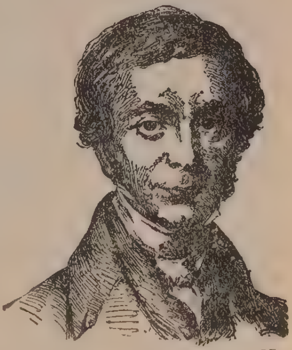
BRIGHT star, would I were steadfast as thou art:
Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors;
No — yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest;
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever — or else swoon to death.

JOHN KEBLE

(1792–1866)

The 'Christian Year,' a small volume of religious poems, appeared in 1827. The verses had all the scholarly simplicity resulting from classical study, and critics quickly recognized their artistic workmanship. But the immediate and astonishing popularity of the work was due to its personal character. «It was the most soothing, tranquillizing, subduing work of the day,» said Newman: «if poems can be found to enliven in dejection and to comfort in anxiety, to cool the over-sanguine, to refresh the weary, and to awe the worldly, to instill resignation into the impatient and calmness into the fearful and agitated, they are these.» Many men and women found solace in these voicings of their own religious life.

The author, John Keble, was not ambitious of literary fame. He had written his poems from time to time as he felt the need of self-expression, and it was only after long persuasion from his friends that he consented to make them public.


John Keble

There is something of the mellow brightness of a summer Sunday about his life and work. «Dear John Keble,» as his associates called him, was a most ardent churchman. With a rare patience and sympathy for repentant sinners he combined an implacable condemnation of wrong-doing, which won him respect as well as love. Throughout the religious storm which, emanating from Oxford, shook all England,—which forced John Henry Newman unwillingly away from his friends and his church,—Keble was a stanch support to more vacillating spirits. His sermon upon apostasy preached in 1833 stirred up people's consciences, and may be said to have initiated the Tractarian movement. He himself wrote several of the more important 'Tracts for the Times.'

His entire life was passed in intimate connection with the church. He was born at Fairford, Gloucestershire, in 1792, but was very young when his father became vicar of Coln-St.-Aldwynd. The elder Keble was a sweet-natured man and a fine classical student, who took charge himself of his son's early education; and so successfully that at fifteen John Keble was admitted to Corpus Christi College, Oxford. From that time the University became very dear to him; and later he exercised an important influence over a long succession of undergraduates. He was appointed a Fellow of Oriel College in 1811, and was a tutor in Oxford for several years. Then he returned to his country home, and led a serene yet earnest life with his family while serving as his father's curate. The great success of 'The Christian Year' resulted in his appointment as professor of poetry at Oxford in 1833,—a congenial position, which he filled most capably. Soon after his father's death in 1835, he married and became vicar of Hursley near Winchester, where he lived until his death in 1866.

He was not a prolific writer, and his occasional poems were carefully and frequently remodeled. In 1846 he published a second volume, called 'Lyra Innocentium'; but although graceful and pleasing, it was less cordially received than 'The Christian Year.'

THE NIGHTINGALE

Lessons sweet of spring returning,
Welcome to the thoughtful heart!
May I call ye sense of learning,
Instinct pure, or heaven-taught art?
Be your title what it may,
Sweet and lengthening April day,
While with you the soul is free,
Ranging wild o'er hill and lea.

Soft as Memnon's harp at morning
To the inward ear devout,
Touched by light, with heavenly warning
Your transporting chords ring out.
Every leaf in every nook,
Every wave in every brook,
Chanting with a solemn voice,
Minds us of our better choice.

Needs no show of mountain hoary,
Winding shore or deepening glen,
Where the landscape in its glory
Teaches truth to wandering men:
Give true hearts but earth and sky,
And some flowers to bloom and die,—
Homely scenes and simple views
Lowly thoughts may best infuse.

CHRIST AT GETHSEMANE

From a Painting by H. Hoffmann

See the soft green willow springing
Where the waters gently pass,
Every way her free arms flinging
O'er the moss and reedy grass.
Long ere winter blasts are fled,
See her tipped with vernal red,
And her kindly flower displayed
Ere her leaf can cast a shade.

Though the rudest hand assail her,
Patiently she droops awhile,
But when showers and breezes hail her
Wears again her willing smile.
Thus I learn contentment's power
From the slighted willow bower,
Ready to give thanks and live
On the least that Heaven may give

If, the quiet brooklet leaving,
Up the stony vale I wind,
Haply half in fancy grieving
For the shades I leave behind,
By the dusty wayside drear,
Nightingales with joyous cheer
Sing, my sadness to reprove,
Gladlier than in cultured grove.

Where the thickest boughs are twining
Of the greenest, darkest tree,
There they plunge, the light declining;
All may hear, but none may see.
Fearless of the passing hoof,
Hardly will they fleet aloof;
So they live in modest ways,
Trust entire, and ceaseless praise.

CHRIST IN THE GARDEN

From 'The Christian Year'

O Lord my God, do thou thy holy will—
I will lie still;
I will not stir, lest I forsake thine arm,
And break the charm
Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast
In perfect rest.

Wild Fancy, peace! thou must not me beguile
With thy false smile;
I know thy flatteries and thy cheating ways;
Be silent, Praise,
Blind guide with siren voice, and blinding all
That hear thy call.

. . . .

Mortal! if life smile on thee, and thou find
All to thy mind,
Think who did once from heaven to hell descend,
Thee to befriend:
So shalt thou dare forego, at His dear call,
Thy best, thine all.

"O Father! not my will, but thine, be done,—"
So spake the Son.
Be this our charm, mellowing earth's ruder noise
Of griefs and joys:
That we may cling forever to Thy breast
In perfect rest!

MORNING

From the 'Episcopal Church Hymnal'

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life, and power, and thought.

New mercies each returning day
Hover around us while we pray;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

If on our daily course our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still of countless price
God will provide for sacrifice.

Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,
As more of heaven in each we see;
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.

The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we need to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

Only, O Lord, in thy dear love,
Fit us for perfect rest above;
And help us, this and every day,
To live more nearly as we pray.

EVENING HYMN

From the 'Episcopal Church Hymnal'

Sun of my soul, thou Savior dear,
It is not night if thou be near;
Oh, may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My weary eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest
Forever on my Savior's breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without thee I cannot live;
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without thee I dare not die.

If some poor wandering child of thine
Have spurned to-day the voice divine,
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin:
Let him no more lie down in sin.

Watch by the sick; enrich the poor
With blessings from thy boundless store;
Be every mourner's sleep to-night
Like infant's slumbers, pure and light.

Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take,
Till in the ocean of thy love
We lose ourselves in heaven above.

GOTTFRIED KELLER

(1819-1890)

The German Cantons of Switzerland, which during the early eighteenth century occupied so prominent a place in the annals of German culture, have in the present century done much to regain this prominence. The brilliantly imaginative and richly colored paintings of Arnold Böcklin, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer's semi-historical romances charged with the emotional fervor of our own time, and above all, the exquisite tales of Gottfried Keller, with their blending of the humorous and the tragic, of the romantic and the realistic, declare the energy of Teutonic genius beyond the bounds of the fatherland. Keller is the most distinguished novelist in German literature since Goethe wrote his 'Wilhelm Meister' and Kleist his 'Michael Kohlhaas.' His work has the freshness and vitality, the human charm, which make it of universal interest. His touch is as firm and sure as it is tender and sympathetic; his technique is that of the realist, but his heart is a poet's. If his writings won their way slowly, the hold they have at last obtained upon the public is the firmer. Keller has taken his place in the front rank among German writers of fiction in this century, and his title is secure.

Gottfried Keller

Gottfried Keller was born at Zürich of humble parentage on July 19th, 1819. While he was still a boy, he heard some say, «The great Goethe is dead;» and ever afterward that name haunted him. He describes finding the fifty volumes of Goethe's works tied together on his bed; he attacked the knot, and «the golden fruit of eighty years fell asunder.» From that hour he read and re-read Goethe, discovering new beauties with each perusal. Nevertheless he mistook his vocation, and expended much fruitless effort in an attempt to become a landscape painter. Gradually, and only after several years of unhappy struggling, it became clear to him that his talents were a poet's, not a painter's; even his sketch-books contained more writing than drawing. His lyric poems and critical essays attracted attention; he received a government stipend which enabled him to study at the University of Heidelberg. In 1850 he went to Berlin, and spent several years in poverty and obscurity. He wished to become a dramatist, but of his dramatic plans none was ever executed. Instead there appeared a new volume of poems, and in 1854 his first great novel, ‘Der Grüne Heinrich’ (Green Henry). This autobiographic romance had cost him five years of almost reluctant effort; for in it he lays bare the «truth and poetry» from his own life. The central theme is practically the same as that of ‘Wilhelm Meister’: it is the story of a young man's mistake in the choice of a profession; of his misdirected efforts, and his intellectual growth. With fineness of observation and fullness of poetic fancy Keller has told the tale of his own artistic and religious development and mental struggle. This novel received a thorough revision in after years, and was republished in its new form in 1879. The author burned all the unsold copies of the first edition.

But the work upon which Keller's fame most securely rests is the collection of tales bearing the title ‘Die Leute von Seldwyla’ (Seldwyla Folk): «The immortal Seldwylars,» Paul Heyse called them. These tales have no other connection with one another than this, that they all treat of the simple country people who dwell in the imaginary but typically Swiss village of Seldwyla. So faithfully realistic is the delineation of Swiss character that many of Keller's countrymen remonstrated against this frank exposure of their national foibles; but this realism is realism with a soul, and over all these delightful pages plays the fancy of a true poet, with his genial humor and loving insight into the human heart. No short story in German literature surpasses in beauty, pathos, and tragic significance the famous tale of ‘Romeo and Juliet of the Village.’ In it are reproduced in humble bucolic surroundings the conditions which brought about the tragedy in Verona. Two peasants are rival claimants for a strip of land; one has a son, the other a daughter: these love each other, are united; but, conscious of the hopelessness of their situation, they go to death together. In ‘The Smith of his Own Fortunes’ satirical humor prevails, but not without sympathy and an ultimate human reconciliation. But few of these tales have been done into English, and yet they are among the most finished and delicate bits of short-story telling in modern literature.

With the appearance of these volumes Keller's fame became established; and when in after years he returned to Zürich he was at least «a writer,» he said, «even though an insignificant one.» In 1861 he received the post of secretary for the Canton Zürich, and for fifteen years faithfully performed the duties of his office. The position was no sinecure, and left him little leisure for literary work. Nevertheless he had written a few tales and poems, and after his retirement from office he devoted himself diligently to literature.

A volume of legends had appeared in 1872; in 1876 came two volumes of Swiss tales, entitled ‘Zürich Stories,’ and others appeared in 1881 with the title of ‘Das Sinngedicht’ (The Epigram). His latest important work was the less satisfactory, satirical novel of ‘Martin Salander,’ published in 1886. It has the qualities of truth and sincerity; but as he said himself, it is deficient in beauty.

Keller was an extremely modest man, and under a bluff exterior was concealed a shy nature. He was surprised at his own literary eminence; and when upon the occasion of his seventieth birthday, for which his distinguished countryman Böcklin designed the medallion, all Germany did him homage, he was deeply touched, and thought too much praise had been bestowed upon his «yarns.» He died in the fullness of his fame, on July 15th, 1890.

THE FOUNDING OF A FAMILY

From ‘The Smith of his Own Fortunes,’ in ‘Seldwyla Folk’

[John Kabys, having exhausted his meagre patrimony in idle expectation of a fortune which did not appear, was at last forced to earn his own livelihood, and accordingly opened a barber-shop in his native town. Here one day he casually learned from a customer that a wealthy old gentleman in Augsburg had been making inquiries if there were still Kabyses in Seldwyla. Acting upon this hint, John went to Augsburg, and the scenes of the following extract took place. The fact that John in his efforts to render his position more secure subsequently became the father of his uncle's heir, thus supplanting himself, gives a touch of humorous irony to the title of the tale.]

«COME up with me to the hall of knights!» said Mr. Litumlei. They went; when the old man had paced solemnly up and down a few times, he began: «Hear my purpose and my proposition, my dear grand-nephew! You are the last of your race; this is a serious fate! But I have one not less serious to bear! Look upon me: Well, then! I am the first of mine!»

Proudly he drew himself up; and John looked at him, but could not discover what it all meant. The other then continued: «‘I am the first of mine,’ means the same as—‘I have determined to found a race as great and glorious as you here see painted on the walls of this hall!’ You see, these are not my ancestors, but the members of an extinct patrician family of this city. When I came here thirty years ago, this house happened to be for sale with all its contents and memorials; and I acquired the whole apparatus at once, as a foundation for the realization of my favorite idea. For I possessed a large fortune, but no name, no ancestors; and I don't even know the baptismal name of my grandfather who married a Kabys. I indemnified myself at first by explaining the painted ladies and gentlemen here as my ancestors, and by making some of them Litumleis, others Kabyses, by means of such tickets as you see: but my family recollections extended to only six or seven persons; the rest of this mass of pictures — the result of four centuries — mocked my efforts. All the more urgently I was thrown upon the future, upon the necessity of inaugurating a lasting race myself, whose honored ancestor I am. Long ago I had my portrait painted, and a genealogical tree as well, at whose root stands my name. But an ill star obstinately pursues me! I already have my third wife, and as yet not one of them has presented me with a girl, to say nothing of a son and heir to the family name. My two former wives, from whom I procured a divorce, have since out of malice had several children by other husbands; and my present wife, whom I have had now seven years, would undoubtedly do the same if I should let her go.

« Your appearance, dear grand-nephew, has given me the idea of resorting to an artificial assistance, such as in history was frequently made use of in dynasties great and small. What do you say to this? — You live with us as a son of the house; I will make you my legal heir! In return, you will perform the following: You sacrifice externally your own family traditions (for you are the last of your race anyway); and at my death — *i. e.*, on your accession as my heir,— you assume my name! I spread the report privately that you are a natural son of mine, the fruit of a mad prank in my youth; you adopt this view and do not contradict it! Later on perhaps a written document about it might be composed,— a memoir, a little novel, a noteworthy love story in which I cut a fiery though imprudent figure, and sow misery for which I atone in old age. Finally you bind yourself to accept from my hand whatever wife I shall choose for you from among the distinguished daughters of the city, for the further prosecution of my design. This in all and in detail is my proposition.»

During this speech John had turned red and white alternately; not from shame or fright, but from astonishment and joy at the fortune that had arrived at last, and at his own wisdom which had brought it to him. But he by no means allowed himself to be disconcerted, but pretended that only with great reluctance could he make up his mind to sacrifice his honored family name and his legitimate birth. In polite and well-chosen words he requested twenty-four hours to consider; and then he began to walk up and down in the beautiful garden, deeply immersed in thought. The lovely flowers — carnations, roses, gillyflowers, crown-imperials, lilies, the geranium beds and jasmine bowers, the myrtle and oleander trees — all ogled him politely and did him homage as their master.

When he had enjoyed for half an hour the perfume, the sunshine, the shade, and the freshness of the fountain, he went with an earnest mien out into the street, turned the corner and entered a bakery, where he indulged in three warm patties with two glasses of fine wine. Then he returned to the garden and again walked for half an hour, but this time smoking a cigar. He discovered a bed of small tender radishes. He pulled a bunch of them from the ground, cleaned them at the fountain, whose stone Tritons blinked at him submissively, and betook himself to a cool brewery, where with his radishes he drank a mug of foaming beer. He enjoyed a pleasant chat with the burghers, and endeavored to transform his native dialect into the softer Suabian, as in all probability he was going to be a man of eminence among these people.

He purposely let the noonday hour go by, and was late at his meal. In order to carry out there a discriminating lack of appetite, he previously ate three Munich white-sausages and drank a second mug of beer, which tasted still better to him than the first. Finally, however, he wrinkled his brow and betook himself with the same to dinner, where he stared at the soup.

Little Litumlei, who generally became passionate and willful at unexpected obstacles, and could not bear contradiction, already felt wrathful anxiety lest his last hope of founding a family should turn to water, and he regarded his incorruptible guest with distrustful glances. At last he could no longer bear the uncertainty as to whether he should be an ancestor or not, and he requested his scrupulous relative to shorten those twenty-four hours and come to a conclusion at once. For he feared lest his nephew's austere virtue should increase with every hour. He fetched with his own hand a bottle of very old Rhine wine from the cellar, of which John had as yet had no suspicion. As the released spirits of summer wafted their invisible odors over the crystal glasses, that clinked so musically, and as with every drop of the liquid gold that passed over his tongue a little flower garden seemed to spring up under his nose, then was the steadfast heart of John Kabys softened, and he gave his consent. The notary public was quickly summoned, and over some excellent coffee a last will and testament was set down in due legal form. In conclusion the artificial-natural son and the race-founding arch-father embraced each other; but it was not like a warm embrace of flesh and blood, but far more solemn, like the collision rather of two great elements whose orbits meet.

So John sat in fortune's lap. He now had nothing to do but to cherish the consciousness of his agreeable destiny, to behave with some consideration towards his father, and to spend an abundance of pocket-money in whatever way best suited him. All this was carried out in the most respectable, unassuming manner, and he dressed like a nobleman. He did not need to purchase any more valuables: his genius now revealed itself, in that what he procured years ago still amply sufficed, thus resembling an accurately constructed design which was now completed in detail by the fullness of fortune. The battle of Waterloo thundered and lightened on his contented breast; chains and dangling ornaments were rocked upon a well-filled stomach; through the gold glasses looked a pair of pleased proud eyes; the cane adorned more than it supported a man that was cautious; and the cigar-case was filled with good weeds which he smoked appreciatively in his Mazeppa holder. The wild horse was already of a brilliant brown hue, while the Mazeppa upon it was just turning a light pink, almost flesh-color; so that the twofold work of art, the carver's and the smoker's, excited the just admiration of connoisseurs. Papa Litumlei, too, was greatly taken with it, and diligently set about learning to color meerschaums under the instruction of his foster-son. A whole collection of such pipes was purchased; but the old man was too restless and impatient for this noble art. The young man had to help him continually and make improvements, which again inspired the former with respect and confidence.

Soon, however, the two men found a still more important employment; for papa now insisted that they should make up together and bring to paper that novel through which John was to be promoted to a natural-sonship. It was to be a secret family document in the form of fragmentary memoirs. To avoid arousing the jealousy of Mrs. Litumlei and disquieting her, it had to be composed in secret session; and was to be shut up surreptitiously in the family archives which still remained to be founded, in order that in future times, when the family should be in full bloom, it might see the light and tell the story of the blood of the Litumleis.

John had already made up his mind, upon the death of the old man, to call himself not plain Litumlei but Kabys-de-Litumlei; for he had an excusable weakness for his own name, which he had wrought so neatly. It was furthermore his intention on that occasion summarily to burn the document they were about to create, through which he was to lose his legitimacy of birth and receive a dissolute mother. For the present however he had to take his part in the work; and this slightly clouded his serenity. But he wisely accommodated himself to circumstances, and one morning shut himself up in a garden room with the old man to begin the work. There they sat opposite each other at table, and suddenly discovered that their undertaking was more difficult than they had thought, inasmuch as neither of them had ever written a hundred consecutive lines in his life. They positively could not find a beginning; and the nearer they put their heads together, the further off was every idea. Finally it occurred to the son that they really ought first to have a quire of fine stout paper to establish a substantial document. That was evident; they started at once to buy it, and wandered in concord through the city. When they had found what they sought, they advised each other, as it was a warm day, to go to a tavern, there to refresh themselves and collect their thoughts. They drank several mugs with satisfaction, and ate nuts, bread, sausages; till suddenly John said he had now devised a beginning for the story, and would run straight home to write it down, that he might not forget it. «Run quickly, then,» said the old man; «in the mean time I will stay here and make up the continuation; I feel that it is on the way to me already!»

So John hastened back to the room with the quire of paper, and wrote:—

«It was in the year 17—, when it was a prosperous year. A pitcher of wine cost 7 florins, a pitcher of cider ½ florin, and a measure of cherry brandy 4 batz, a two-pound loaf of white bread 1 batz, 1 ditto rye bread ½ batz, and a sack of potatoes 8 batz. The hay too had turned out well, and oats were two florins a bushel. The peas and beans turned out well too, and flax and hemp had not turned out well; on the other hand again, the olives and tallow or suet had: so that all in all, the remarkable condition of things came about that society was well supplied with food and drink, scantily clad, and then again well lighted. So the year came summarily to a close, and every one was justly curious to experience how the new year would come in. The winter showed itself a proper regular winter, cold and clear; a warm covering of snow lay upon the fields and protected the young seed. But nevertheless a singular thing took place at last. It snowed, thawed, and froze again during the month of January, in so frequent alternation that not only did many people fall sick, but also there came to be such a multitude of icicles that the whole country looked like a huge glass magazine, and every one wore a small board on the head in order not to be pricked by the points of the falling icicles. For the rest, the prices of staples still remained firm, as above remarked, and fluctuated at last towards a remarkable spring."

At this point the little old man came eagerly running in, seized the sheet, and without reading what had been written and without saying a word, he wrote straight on:—

"Then *he* came, and was called Adam Litumlei. He wouldn't stand a joke, and was born anno 17—. He came rushing along like a spring storm. He was one of *Those*. He wore a red velvet coat, with a feather in his hat, and a sword. He wore a gold-embroidered waistcoat, with the motto 'Youth hath no virtue!' He wore golden spurs and rode upon a white charger; this he stabled at the best inn, and cried, 'What the devil do I care? for it is spring, and youth must sow its wild oats!' He paid cash for everything, and every one marveled at him. He drank the wine, he ate the roast; he said, 'All this amounts to nothing!' Further he said, 'Come, my lovely darling, thou art more to me than wine and roasts, than silver and gold! What do I care? Think what thou wilt, what must be must be!'"

Here he suddenly came to a standstill and positively could get no further. They read together what had been written, found it was not bad, and spent eight days pulling themselves together again,—during which time they led a dissipated life, for they went frequently to the beer-house in order to get a new start; but fortune did not smile every day. Finally John caught another thread, ran home, and continued:—

« These words the young Mr. Litumlei addressed to a certain Liselein Federspiel, who lived in a remote quarter of the city, where the gardens are, and just beyond is a little wood or grove. She was one of the most charming beauties the city had ever produced, with blue eyes and small feet. Her figure was so fine that she didn't need a corset; and out of the money thus saved, for she was poor, she was enabled little by little to buy a violet-colored silk gown. But all this was enhanced by a general sadness that trembled not only over her lovely features but over the whole harmony of Miss Federspiel's form, so that whenever the wind was still you might believe you heard the mournful tones of an Æolian harp. A very memorable May month had now come, into which all four seasons seemed to be compressed. At first there was snow, so that the nightingales sang with snowflakes on their heads as if they wore white nightcaps; then followed such a hot spell that the children went bathing in the open air and the cherries ripened, and the records have preserved a rhyme about it:—

'Ice and snowflake,
Boys bathe in the lake,
Cherries ripe and blossoming vine,
All in one May month might be thine.

« These natural phenomena made men meditative and affected them in different ways. Miss Liselein Federspiel, who was especially pensive, speculated about it too, and realized for the first time that she bore her weal and woe, her virtue and her fall, in her own hand; and because she now held the scales and weighed this responsible freedom, was just why she became so sad about it. Now as she stood there, that audacious red-jacket came along and said without delay, 'Federspiel, I love thee!' whereupon by a singular accident she suddenly altered her previous line of thought and broke out into ringing laughter.»

« Now let me go on,» cried the old man, who came running up in a great heat and read over the young man's shoulder. « It's just right for me now!» and he continued the story as follows: «'There's nothing to laugh at!' said he, 'for I don't take a joke!' In short, it came about as it had to come: on the hill in the little wood sat my Federspiel on the green sward and kept on laughing; but the knight had already mounted his white horse and was flying away into the distance so fast that in a few minutes, in the aerial perspective that took place, he appeared blue. He vanished, returned no more; for he was a devil of a fellow!"

"Ha, now it's done!" shouted Litumlei, as he threw down the pen; "I've done my part, now bring it to a conclusion. I am completely exhausted by these hellish inventions! By the Styx! I don't wonder that the ancestors of great houses are valued so highly and are painted life-size, for I know what trouble the founding of mine costs! But haven't I given the thing bold treatment?"

John then proceeded:—

"Poor Miss Federspiel experienced great dissatisfaction when she suddenly noticed that the seductive youth had vanished at the same time almost with the remarkable May month. But she had the presence of mind quickly to declare herself that the occurrence had not occurred, in order to restore the former condition of equally balanced scales. But she enjoyed this epilogue of innocence only a short time. The summer came; they began to reap; it was yellow before one's eyes wherever one looked, from all the golden bounty; prices sank again materially; Liselein Federspiel stood on the hill and looked at it all; but she could see nothing for very grief and remorse. Autumn came; every wine-stock was a flowing spring; there was an incessant drumming on the earth from the falling pears and apples; people drank and sang, bought and sold. Every one supplied himself; the whole country was a fair; and cheap and abundant as everything was, luxuries were nevertheless prized and cherished and thankfully accepted. Only the luxury that Liselein brought remained unvalued and not worth asking about, as if the human hordes that were swimming in superfluity could not find use for one single little mouth more. She therefore wrapped herself in her virtue and bore, a month before her time, a lively little boy whose condition in life was in every way calculated to make him the smith of his own fortune.

"This son passed so bravely through a very varied career that by a strange fate he was finally united with his father, brought up by him in honor, and made his heir; and this is the second ancestor of the race of Litumlei."

Under this document the old man wrote: "Examined and confirmed, Johann Polycarpus Adam Litumlei." And John signed it likewise. Then Mr. Litumlei put his seal upon it with the coat-of-arms, consisting of three half fish-hooks golden, in a field blue, and seven square brook-stilts white and red, on a green bar sinister.

But they were surprised that the document was no larger; for they had written scarcely one sheet full of the whole quire. Nevertheless, they deposited it in the archives, to which purpose they devoted for the present an old iron chest; and they were contented and in good spirits.

Translated by Charles Harvey Genung.

THOMAS À KEMPIS

(1380-1471)

BY JOHN MALONE

In a little nook with a little book.” Good old monk of the peaceful Holland lowlands, how well you knew the best delight of man! Your own “little book” survives to us, an imperishable witness of the truth and love that lived in your gentle heart! Next to the Bible, the ‘Imitation of Christ’ of Thomas à Kempis is the book most generally read by Christian people. Of the making of books, of the love for them, and of the joy a good book gives to the children of the world, Thomas knew the full glory.

Kempen, a rustic village not many miles northwest of Düsseldorf in Rhenish Prussia, was so named in old time from the flatness of the country, the *campus*. The parents of Thomas were very humble working-people of this place; and the family name of Hämmerken is attributed to the father's probable position as a worker in metal. Thomas Hämmerken, sometimes called Haemmerlein, or in Latin *Malleolus*, the “little hammer,” was born to John and Gertrude in 1380, and was carefully schooled in virtue, patience, and poverty under their low roof-tree; until at the age of thirteen he was, according to the custom of the time, sent to try his way to a religious life. His brother John, fifteen years older, had made the name À Kempis a distinguished one amongst the “Brothers of the Common Life,” a house of Augustinian Canons Regular at Deventer in Overyssel, lower Netherlands. The chivalry of the lowly in those ages of faith expressed itself with gracious hospitality to all “poor scholars”; and we may be sure the boy who walked the long road down to the brink of the Zuyder Zee met no stint of God-speeds from the country folk. But brother John had gone from Deventer to join Gerard Groot at Windesheim, so away trudged the sturdy little wayfarer to the new journey's end. Fondly welcomed there, he took a letter from John to Florentius at Deventer. Under the wise direction of this great man the little À Kempis entered the public school, then under the rectorship of John Boheme. While studying there the usual course of reading, writing, music, Latin, catechism, and Bible history, Thomas lived at the house of a pious lady, Zedera, widow of a knight, John of Runen.

From about 1393–4 Thomas continued in the work of ordinary school life under the care of Florentius, who was the most dear friend and associate of brother John. In the mean time John à Kempis had been made the first prior of the new convent or monastery of Mount St. Agnes near Zwolle, the famous Agnetenberg, to be forever so for the life work of the rosy-cheeked schoolboy of Deventer. Zutphen, the death place of Sir Philip Sidney, is near by the schoolhouse of À Kempis. Thomas went to his brother at Mount St. Agnes in 1399, and entered upon preparation for the life of a monk of that house and rule. In addition to their priestly teaching and monastic duties, the «Brothers of the Common Life» were famous bookmakers. The beautiful manuscripts which with such devout care and worshipful art they slowly perfected with pen and brush, in the clean and wholesome scriptorium, are gems of wonderful delight in the great treasure-houses of such priceless things to us and ages of men. John à Kempis was a worthy master of his brother. They brought with them from the little smithy in Kempen a good endowment of hand cunning. The prior was a fine miniature-maker, as well as an expert in the work of producing the perfectly written books for which the monastery was growing well renowned. Thomas soon became, and remained to the end of his life in spite of age, an expert calligrapher. He was invested with the habit of the order and admitted to the priesthood at the age of thirty-four, in 1414. They did not do things in a hurry, those foregoers of our father Knickerbocker. Thomas began to write his first missal in the year after his ordination, and is said to have finished it in 1417. The first *missal!* What years of slow and patient practice upon lesser works there must have been! Ripe in mind and full of holy thought, Thomas, it is believed, began the ‘Imitation’ either just before or soon after his entry into the priesthood. The execution of this marvelous «booklet,» as it was called by its first readers, engaged about ten years. It was produced as a series of instructive meditations, given out from time to time to the brothers of the order. For that reason its four books are divided, yet dependent upon each other. At this time, and probably while engaged upon the ‘Imitation,’ he wrote the ‘Little Alphabet of the Monk in the School of Christ’ after Psalm cxix. This curious and somewhat droll work is sometimes called the ‘Saint's Alphabet.’

The quiet of the teachers and book-writers at Agnetenberg was rudely broken by an angry quarrel between the people of Overyssel and the hierarchy. The country was laid under an interdict for refusing to accept Zweder de Colenborgh as bishop appointed to the see of Utrecht by Pope Martin V. This dire trouble, which began in 1425, culminated in 1429 by the closing of the churches in the banned district. The monastery of St. Agnes, for obeying the order to withdraw its religious ministrations from the people, was obliged to take its people out of the disturbed and enraged province. Thomas had been elected sub-prior just before this event and he was an active aid in the guidance, on St. Barnabas's day 1429, of the unhoused monks across the Zuyder Zee to the brother house of Lunenkirk in Friesland. Here the brothers lived until the interdict was raised in 1432 by Pope Eugenius IV. It was during this exile that John à Kempis died. He had gone from the Agnetenberg to become rector and confessor of the convent of Bethany near Arnheim, and being ill in 1431 Thomas went to him. The two were together for fourteen months, until November 4th, 1432, when the loving elder brother went a little before through the gateway of Death.

The bitter schism which had tormented the Church since the death of Gregory XI. in 1378, which had survived in rancor the great Councils of Pisa and of Constance, and the horror of the long Bohemian war, was for a time thought to be ended by the same tribunal which restored the monks of St. Agnes to their own house. One may easily imagine therefore that their home-coming was a special occasion of joy; a joy unfortunately not to last. That exemplary evidence against the pretenders who have taken occasion from his humility to filch from the monk of St. Agnes the merit of his best work, the 1441 autograph manuscript of the 'Imitation,' now in the Burgundian Library at Brussels, may well have been begun by Thomas as an offering of thanksgiving for the restored peace of God.

In 1447 the brothers made Thomas their sub-prior for the second time. From the return to Mount St. Agnes until his death in 1471, within the last decade of a century of well-spent life, the days of À Kempis were without event beyond the routine of his teaching, writing, and priestly toil. Like all the brothers he worked to the last moment of physical endurance, and it is said of him that so perfect were his physical faculties that he never needed spectacles for even the most delicate pen tracing.

A portrait is extant which represents him dressed in the habit of the Augustinians, and seated upon a rocky ledge amidst the quiet of a Dutch landscape. An open book is in his hand, another at his feet, with the words in the country's speech, «In een hoecken mit een boecken.» This painting, now known as the Gertruidenberg portrait, was found in the abbey of St. Agnes by Franz von Tholen, about one hundred years after the death of À Kempis. It represents a stout, large-browed man of medium size, of Flemish features, with lustrous, far-away-looking, kindly eyes.

Of his death Adrian de But, in his chronicle, says under the year 1471:—

> «In this year died Brother Thomas à Kempis of Mount St. Agnes, a professor of the Order of Canons Regular, who published many writings, and composed in rhythm that book on the text 'Who followeth Me.'»

The controversy about the authorship of the ‘Imitation’ is like that about the works of Shakespeare. Its primary cause is the unassuming greatness of the writer, and his honesty to his rule of life. The fuel upon which it feeds is the incapacity of little-minded men to think of any world beyond the horizon which corrals the human herd. Volumes have been written in this curious phase of vicarious plagiarism; but the plain tale of contemporary testimony, and the undoubted autographs of À Kempis himself, put them outside the bars of evidence.

The language of À Kempis is the Latin of his day, an interesting witness in the growth of modern tongues. It is not classical, but smacks strongly of the land and of the people. The knowledge of the Latin speech was far more common in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries than is generally supposed. All people not utterly ignorant had a speaking knowledge of it, and filled the current of conversation with crude translations of their common saws. À Kempis is full of the vigor of this growth of new speech. It must have seemed strange to the stickler for classic latinity at the court of Elizabeth to hear Launcelot Gobbo quoting from the ‘Imitation’: «*Laun.*— The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: *you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.*»—‘Merchant of Venice,’ Act ii., scene 2.

All good books paid their tribute to the mind of À Kempis. His favorites were, first of course the Scriptures, then St. Bernard, St. Gregory the Great, St. Ambrose, and St. Thomas. Aristotle, Ovid, Seneca, and Dante furnished him from time to time with apt illustrations of his thought. A recent writer has well summed up in one happy phrase the sense of Brother Thomas's methods and purpose, by the name «A minnesinger of the love of God.» The miscalled mysticism of Thomas is the poesy of a love which disdains all lesser objects and fixes itself to the person of God himself. There is no abstruse life problem in such a bent of soul. The aspiration towards the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, which well sung wins the poet's bay wreath, stays not the willingness of men's ears.

The smaller works of À Kempis are—‘The Soliloquy of the Soul,’ ‘Solitude and Silence,’ ‘The Little Garden of Roses,’ ‘The Valley of Lilies,’ and a number of similar essays. He wrote also some sweet church hymns, and three books of the ‘Lives of the Canons’ and the ‘Chronicle of St. Agnes.’ The first edition of his works was published at Nuremberg by George Pirkheimer, in 1494.

Jno. Malone

ON THE JOYS OF HEAVEN

From ‘The Voice of Christian Life in Song: or, Hymns and Hymn-Writers of Many Lands and Ages’

High the angel choirs are raising
  Heart and voice in harmony;
The Creator King still praising,
  Whom in beauty there they see.

Sweetest strains, from soft harps stealing;
Trumpets, notes of triumph pealing;
Radiant wings and white stoles gleaming,
Up the steps of glory streaming;
Where the heavenly bells are ringing,
Holy, holy, holy! singing
  To the mighty Trinity!
Holy, holy, holy! crying;
For all earthly care and sighing
  In that city cease to be!

Every voice is there harmonious,
Praising God in hymns symphonious;
Love each heart with light enfolding
As they stand in peace beholding
    There the Triune Deity!
Whom adore the seraphim,
  Aye with love eternal burning;
Venerate the cherubim,
  To their fount of honor turning;
  Whilst angelic thrones adoring
    Gaze upon His majesty.

Oh how beautiful that region,
And how fair that heavenly legion,
  Where thus men and angels blend!
Glorious will that city be,
Full of deep tranquillity,
  Light and peace from end to end!
All the happy dwellers there
  Shine in robes of purity,
  Keep the law of charity,
  Bound in firmest unity;
Labor finds them not, nor care.

Ignorance can ne'er perplex,
Nothing tempt them, nothing vex;
Joy and health their fadeless blessing,
Always all things good possessing.

ON CHRISTIAN PATIENCE

From 'Hymns and Poems'

Adversa mundi tolera

For Christ's dear sake with courage bear
Whatever ills betide;
Prosperity is oft a snare,
And puffs the heart with pride.

What seemed thy loss will often prove
To be thy truest gain;
And sufferings borne with patient love
A jeweled crown obtain.

By this thou wilt the angels please,
Wilt glorify the Lord,
Thy neighbor's faith and hope increase,
And earn a rich reward.

Brief is this life, and brief its pain,
But long the bliss to come;
Trials endured for Christ attain
A place with martyrdom.

The Christian soul by patience grows
More perfect day by day;
And brighter still, and brighter glows
With heaven's eternal ray;

To Christ becomes more lovable,
More like the Saints on high;
Dear to the good; invincible
Against the Enemy.

OF THE WONDERFUL EFFECT OF DIVINE LOVE

From the ‹Imitation of Christ›

I BLESS thee, heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, because thou hast vouchsafed to be mindful of so poor a wretch as I.

O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, I give thanks to thee, who art sometimes pleased to refresh with thy consolation me who am unworthy of any consolation.

I bless thee and glorify thee evermore, together with thy only begotten Son and the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, to all eternity.

Come then, Lord God, holy one that lovest me! for when thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within me will leap with joy.

Thou art my glory and the rejoicing of my heart.

Thou art my hope and my refuge in the day of my tribulation.

But because I am as yet weak in love and imperfect in virtue, therefore do I stand in need of being strengthened and comforted by thee. Wherefore visit me again and again; and instruct me by all holy discipline.

Free me from evil passions and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that being inwardly healed and thoroughly cleansed, I may become fit to love, strong to suffer, constant to persevere.

LOVE is a great thing, a great good indeed, which alone makes light all that is burdensome, and bears with even mind all that is uneven.

For it carries a burthen without being burthened; and it makes all that which is bitter sweet and savory.

The love of Jesus is noble, and spurs us on to do great things, and excites us to desire always things more perfect.

Love desires to have its abode above, and not to be kept back by things below.

Love desires to be at liberty and estranged from all worldly affection, lest its inner view be hindered, lest it suffer itself to be entangled through some temporal interest, or give way through mishap. . . .

Nothing is sweeter than love; nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing broader, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller or better in heaven and in earth; for love is born of God, and can rest only in God above all things created.

The lover flies, runs, and rejoices; he is free and not held.

He gives all for all and has all in all, because he rests in One supreme above all, from whom all good flows and proceeds.

He looks not at the gifts, but turns himself above all goods to the Giver.

Love often knows no measure, but warmly glows above all measure.

Love feels no burthen, regards not labors, would willingly do more than it is able, pleads not impossibility, because it feels sure that it can and may do all things.

It is able therefore to do all things; and it makes good many deficiencies, and frees many things for being carried out, where he who loves not faints and lies down.

Love watches, and sleeping, slumbers not; weary, is not tired; straitened, is not constrained; frightened, is not disturbed; but like a living flame and a burning torch, it bursts forth upwards and safely overpasses all.

Whosoever loves knows the cry of this voice.

A loud cry in the ears of God is that ardent affection of the soul which says, My God, my love, thou art all mine and I am all thine.

Enlarge me in thy love, that I may learn to taste with the inner mouth of the heart how sweet it is to love, and to be dissolved and swim in a sea of love.

Let me be possessed by love, going above myself through excess of fervor and awe.

Let me sing the song of love; let me follow thee, my beloved, on high; let my soul lose herself in thy praises, exulting in love.

Let me love thee more than myself, and myself only for thee, and all in thee who truly love thee, as the law of love which shines forth from thee commands. . . .

Love is swift, sincere, pious, pleasant, and delightful; strong, patient, faithful, prudent, long-suffering, manly, and never seeking itself; for where a man seeks himself, there he falls from love. . . .

Love is circumspect, humble, and upright; not soft, not light, not intent upon vain things; sober, chaste, steadfast, quiet, and guarded in all its senses.

Love is submissive and obedient to superiors; mean and contemptible in its own eyes; devout and ever giving thanks to God; always trusting and hoping in him, even when it tastes not the relish of God's sweetness,—for there is no living in love without pain.

Whosoever is not ready to suffer all things, and to stand resigned to the will of the beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover.

He who loves must willingly embrace all that is hard and bitter, for the sake of the beloved.

OF THE DESIRE OF ETERNAL LIFE, AND HOW GREAT ARE THE BENEFITS PROMISED TO THEM THAT FIGHT

From the ‹Imitation of Christ›

1. SON, when thou perceivest the desire of eternal bliss to be infused into thee from above, and thou wouldst fain go out of the tabernacle of this body, that thou mightest contemplate My brightness without any shadow of change,—enlarge thy heart, and receive this holy inspiration with thy whole desire.

Return the greatest thanks to the Supreme Goodness, which dealeth so condescendingly with thee, mercifully visiteth thee, ardently inciteth thee, and powerfully raiseth thee up, lest by thy own weight thou fall down to the things of earth.

For it is not by thy own thoughtfulness or endeavor that thou receivest this, but by the mere condescension of heavenly grace and Divine regard; that so thou mayest advance in virtues and greater humility, and prepare thyself for future conflicts, and labor with the whole affection of thy heart to keep close to Me, and serve Me with a fervent will.

2. Son, the fire often burneth, but the flame ascendeth not without smoke.

And so the desires of some are on fire after heavenly things, and yet they are not free from the temptation of carnal affection.

Therefore is it not altogether purely for God's honor that they act, when they so earnestly petition Him.

Such also is oftentimes thy desire, which thou hast professed to be so importunate.

For that is not pure and perfect which is alloyed with self-interest.

3. Ask not that which is pleasant and convenient, but that which is acceptable to Me and for My honor; for if thou judgest rightly, thou oughtest to prefer and to follow My appointment rather than thine own desire or any other desirable thing.

I know thy desire, and I have often heard thy groanings.

Thou wouldst wish to be already in the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

Now doth the eternal dwelling, and the heavenly country full of festivity, delight thee.

But that hour is not yet come; for there is yet another time, a time of war, a time of labor and of probation.

Thou desirest to be filled with the Sovereign Good, but thou canst not at present attain to it.

I am He: wait for Me, saith the Lord, until the kingdom of God come.

4. Thou hast yet to be tried upon earth and exercised in many things.

Consolation shall sometimes be given thee, but abundant satiety shall not be granted thee.

Take courage, therefore, and be valiant, as well in doing as in suffering things repugnant to nature.

Thou must put on the new man, and be changed into another person.

That which thou wouldst not, thou must oftentimes do; and that which thou wouldst, thou must leave undone.

What pleaseth others shall prosper, what is pleasing to thee shall not succeed.

What others say shall be hearkened to; what thou sayest shall be reckoned as naught.

Others shall ask, and shall receive; thou shalt ask, and not obtain.

5. Others shall be great in the esteem of men; about thee nothing shall be said.

To others this or that shall be committed; but thou shalt be accounted as of no use.

At this, nature will sometimes repine, and it will be a great matter if thou bear it with silence.

In these, and many such-like things, the faithful servant of the Lord is wont to be tried how far he can deny and break himself in all things.

There is scarce anything in which thou standest so much in need of dying to thyself as in seeing and suffering things that are contrary to thy will, and more especially when those things are commanded which seem to thee inconvenient and of little use.

And because, being under authority, thou darest not resist the higher power, therefore it seemeth to thee hard to walk at the beck of another, and wholly to give up thy own opinion.

6. But consider, son, the fruit of these labors, their speedy termination, and their reward exceeding great; and thou wilt not hence derive affliction, but the most strengthening consolation in thy suffering.

For in regard to that little of thy will which thou now willingly forsakest, thou shalt forever have thy will in heaven.

For there thou shalt find all that thou willest, all that thou canst desire.

There shall be to thee the possession of every good, without fear of losing it.

There thy will, always one with Me, shall not covet any extraneous or private thing. There no one shall resist thee, no one complain of thee, no one obstruct thee, nothing shall stand in thy way; but every desirable good shall be present at the same moment, shall replenish all thy affections and satiate them to the full.

There I will give thee glory for the contumely thou hast suffered; a garment of praise for thy sorrow; and for having been seated here in the lowest place, the throne of My kingdom forever.

There will the fruit of obedience appear, there will the labor of penance rejoice, and humble subjection shall be gloriously crowned.

Now, therefore, bow thyself down humbly under the hands of all, and heed not who it was that said or commanded this.

But let it be thy great care, that whether thy superior or inferior or equal require anything of thee, or hint at anything, thou take all in good part, and labor with a sincere will to perform it.

Let one seek this, another that; let this man glory in this thing, another in that, and be praised a thousand thousand times: but thou, for thy part, rejoice neither in this nor in that, but in the contempt of thyself, and in My good pleasure and honor alone.

This is what thou hast to wish for, that whether in life or in death, God may be always glorified in thee.

THAT A MAN SHOULD NOT BE TOO MUCH DEJECTED, EVEN WHEN HE FALLETH INTO SOME DEFECTS

From the ‹Imitation of Christ›

My son, patience and humility in adversities are more pleasing to Me, than much comfort and devotion when things go well.

Why art thou so grieved for every little matter spoken against thee?

Although it had been much more, thou oughtest not to have been moved.

But now let it pass: it is not the first that hath happened, nor is it anything new; neither shall it be the last, if thou live long.

Thou art courageous enough, so long as nothing adverse befalleth thee.

Thou canst give good counsel also, and canst strengthen others with thy words; but when any tribulation suddenly comes to thy door, thou failest in counsel and in strength.

Observe then thy great frailty, of which thou too often hast experience in small occurrences.

It is notwithstanding intended for thy good, when these and such-like trials happen to thee.

Put it out of thy heart the best thou canst; and if tribulation have touched thee, yet let it not cast thee down nor long perplex thee.

Bear it at least patiently, if thou canst not joyfully.

Although thou be unwilling to hear it, and conceivest indignation thereat, yet restrain thyself, and suffer no inordinate word to pass out of thy mouth, whereby [Christ's] little ones may be offended.

The storm which is now raised shall quickly be appeased, and inward grief shall be sweetened by the return of grace.

Be more patient of soul, and gird thyself to greater endurance.

All is not lost, although thou do feel thyself very often afflicted or grievously tempted.

Thou art a man, and not God; thou art flesh, not an angel.

How canst thou look to continue alway in the same state of virtue, when an angel in heaven hath fallen, as also the first man in Paradise?

OMAR KHAYYÁM

1050 (?)–1123 (?)

BY NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

On a reed-grown marshy plain at the foot of the Elbruz Mountains stands an ancient city of Khorássán. It existed before the days of Alexander the Great, who is said to have destroyed it. It was then rebuilt by Shapúr, for whom it was named. From the lofty hills, fertile to the very top, twelve thousand streams water the province, and the river Saka lends its beauty to this city, which is blessed above others with a pure and temperate climate. Exquisite fruits and flowers abound. Here bloom the roses,

«With petals closed against the winds' disgrace»;

fields of tulips droop their heavy heads; the violet and narcissus, the jessamine and eglantine and lily, of which the Persian poets have sung so eloquently, scent the air with their perfumes. Here the soft languorous night has since ages immemorial listened to the amorous chanting of the bulbul and the monotonous complaint of the ring-dove, dear to lovers. This city and the villages scattered about in its vicinity were famous by reason of the poets who there first saw the light. Nishápúr itself was the birthplace of the great poet and astronomer Omar, called Khayyám or the Tent-maker. His whole name was Ghias ud-dín Abul Fath Omar Ibn Ibrahim al-Khayyám. The date of his birth is not exactly known; but there is a tradition that he died in the year 1123 of our era (517 A. H.), and that he finished his school education in 1042.

When Omar was a youth, Nishápúr boasted the presence of one of the greatest and wisest men of Khorássán, «a man highly honored and reverenced.» This was the Imám Muaffek, who had the reputation of being such a perfect teacher that «every one who studied the Koran and the traditions of the prophets under him would assuredly attain to honor and happiness.» In his school Omar was instructed in Mussulman lore, and made the acquaintance of two youths who equally with himself won the fame promised the Imám's faithful pupils. One of these was Nizam ul Mulk, who became Vizier to two successive Shahs; the other was Hassan Ibn Sabah, afterwards founder of the Iranian Ismailites, the terrible Shaikh of the Assassins. Nizam ul Mulk in his Testament (Wasáyá) tells how the friendship of the three was formed:—

> «Both Omar and Hassan were of the same age as I was, and equally remarkable for excellence of intelligence and power of intellect. We became friends, and when we went out from the Imám's class we used to repeat to one another the lesson we had just heard. . . . One day that miscreant Hassan said to us, ‹It is the general opinion that the disciples of Imám Muaffik attain to fortune; and no doubt one of us will do so, even though all may not. What agreement or compact is there now between us?› I said, ‹Whatever you please.› He answered, ‹Whichever of us may attain to fortune shall share it with the others, and not engross it himself.› We agreed to those terms, and a compact was made accordingly.»

He goes on to tell how after his appointment as Vizier to the Shah Alp Arslan, Omar Khayyám appeared before him; but instead of accepting preferment at court he said, «The greatest favor which you can do me is to let me live in retirement, where under your protection I may occupy myself in amassing the riches of learning and in praying for your long life.»

Accordingly Nizam ul Mulk assigned Omar a yearly pension of 1200 gold miskals and allowed him to retire to his native city, where he devoted himself especially to the study of mathematics and astronomy. On the succession of Malik Shah he was appointed Astronomer Royal at Merv, in which capacity he compiled some astronomical tables called Zij-i-Malikshâni. He was one of the eight learned men employed to revise the ancient Persian calendar; a work comparable to the reform of the Julian calendar under Pope Gregory XIII. five centuries later, and by some authorities considered even preferable to it. There is in existence a work on algebra which Omar compiled, and a study of ‹The Difficulties of Euclid's Definitions› is preserved in the Library at Leyden. A Persian biographer who lived at Nishápúr, and may have known Omar personally, reflects the general impression made by the astronomer-poet on his contemporaries:—

> «Omar al-Khayyám, Imám of Khorássán, and the greatest scholar of his time, was versed in all the learning of the Greeks. He was wont to exhort men to seek the One Author of all by purifying the bodily actions to secure the sanctification of the soul. He also used to recommend the study of politics as laid down in Greek authors. The later Sufis have caught at the apparent sense of part of his poems and accommodated them to their own canon, making them a subject of discussion in their assemblies and conventicles, but the esoteric sense consists in axioms of natural religion and principles of universal obligation. When the men of his time anathematized his doctrines, and drew forth his opinions from the concealment in which he had veiled them, he went in fear of his life, and placed a check on the sallies of his tongue and his pen. He made the pilgrimage, but it was from accident rather than piety,

still betraying his unorthodox views. On his arrival at Baghdad, the men who prosecuted the same ancient studies as he, flocked to meet him; but he shut the door in their faces, as one who had renounced those studies and cultivated them no longer. On his return to his native city he made a practice of attending the morning and evening prayers, and of disguising his private opinions; but for all that they were no secret. In astronomy and in philosophy he was without a rival, and his eminence in those sciences would have passed into a proverb had he only possessed self-control.»

It is extremely probable that Sharastani's account of him — making him out an arrant hypocrite — was tinged by prejudice. The «Epicurean audacity of thought» expressed in his poems caused him to be looked on by his own people with suspicion. Edward Fitzgerald in the introduction to his translation or paraphrase says:—

«He is said to have been especially hated and dreaded by the Sufis, whose practice he ridiculed, and whose faith amounts to little more than his own when stript of the mysticism and formal recognition of Islamism under which Omar would not hide. Their poets, including Hāfiz, who are (with the exception of Firdausī) the most considerable in Persia, borrowed largely indeed of Omar's material, but turning it to a mystical use more convenient to themselves and the people they addressed,— a people quite as quick of doubt as of belief; as keen of bodily sense as of intellectual; and delighting in a cloudy composition of both, in which they could float luxuriously between heaven and earth, and this world and the next, on the wings of a poetical expression that might serve indifferently for either. Omar was too honest of heart as well as of head for this. Having failed (however mistakenly) of finding any Providence but Destiny, and any world but this, he set about making the most of it; preferring rather to soothe the soul through the senses into acquiescence with things as he saw them, than to perplex it with vain disquietude after what they *might be*.»

Contentedly living in his beautiful city of Nishápúr, where the roses which he loved so passionately wafted their fragrance across his terrace, occupied with those lofty questions which come home with doubly powerful insistence to an astronomer, he looked at the world with curiously quizzical eyes. Occasionally, as a recreation perhaps, he would compose an exquisitely perfect little quatrain or Rubái'y, the conventional form of which called for the first two lines and the last to rhyme, the rhymes being in many cases triple, quadruple, or even quintuple. The third line was generally left blank, though there are instances of the same rhyme occurring in all four lines. Like the conventional Japanese poems, these Rubáiyát are each entirely distinct and disconnected. In the manuscripts that have come down to the present time they are always copied in alphabetical order, arranged in accordance with the letter that ends the rhyme.

Edward Fitzgerald ingeniously «tessellated» a selection of these quatrains into a sort of Persian mosaic, making of them a sort of loosely connected elegy, and thus gave extraordinary emphasis to one part of Omar Khayyám's many-sided genius. It is safe to say that Omar himself had no such consistent scheme of pessimism. If one may judge at all from the manuscripts, he was a creature of many varying moods. At one time his audacious impiety is colossal:—

«On that dread day, when wrath shall rend the sky,
And darkness dim the bright stars' galaxy,
I'll seize the Loved One by his skirt, and cry
‹Why hast thou doomed these guiltless ones to die?›»

At another time he is full of hope; the future life seems to gleam on his inner sight:—

«Death's terrors spring from baseless fantasy,
Death yields the tree of immortality;
Since 'Isa [Jesus] breathed new life into my soul,
Eternal death has washed its hands of me.»

At another he is a fatalist:—

«When Allah mixt my clay, he knew full well
My future acts, and could each one foretell;
Without his will no act of mine was wrought:
Is it then just to punish me in hell?

«'Twas writ at first, whatever was to be,
By pen unheeding bliss or misery,
Yea, writ upon the tablet once for all:
To murmur or resist is vanity.»

In his liberality toward other creeds he stands at the very antipodes of the narrow-minded Muslim of his day, or of ours:—

«Pagodas, just as mosques, are homes of prayer;
'Tis prayer that church-bells chime unto the air:
Yea, Church and Ka'ba, Rosary and Cross,
Are all but divers tongues of world-wide prayer.

«Hearts with the light of love illumined well,
Whether in mosque or synagogue they dwell,
Have *their* names written in the book of love,
Unvext by hopes of heaven or fears of hell.

«They say, when the last trump shall sound its knell
Our Friend will sternly judge and doom to hell.
Can aught but good from perfect goodness come?
Compose your trembling hearts, 'twill all be well.»

Again he paraphrases the words of the Christ:—

«If you seek Him, abandon child and wife,
Arise, and sever all these ties to life:
All these are bonds to check you on your course;
Arise, and cut these bonds as with a knife.»

He goes so far as to say that it is better to be a drunkard and see the light of God than be in darkness in the sanctuary:—

«In taverns better far commune with thee
Than pray in mosques and fail thy face to see!
Oh, first and last of all thy creatures thou;
'Tis thine to burn and thine to cherish me.»

Omar loved to indulge in sophistries and paradoxes; to mystify and confuse. He delighted in drawing on himself the hatred of his Sufi opponents, and then teasing them with the flashing wit of his keen retort. How can one tell whether he was at heart a cynic or an Epicurean? Was the wine-cup which he exalts in so many stanzas a tavern beaker, or a symbol of the Divine? Was the «cypress-slender minister of wine» an earthly maiden with whom he sported in idle dalliance by the side of the babbling brook while the nightingales chanted around, or was the expression a mystic type of the soul?

What was man in his eyes? At one moment he was the very summary of creation, the «bowl of Jamshed» in which the whole universe is reflected as in a mirror; at another he is a puppet, he is as a drop of water swallowed up in the vast ocean, a bubble sparkling with iridescent hues for a brief instant and then vanishing forever. His ideas of God are no less contradictory. On the one hand God is approachable: he is the friend of man, infinitely merciful, too kind to doom man to a hell which man has no reason to fear because he is a sinner,—for if he were not a sinner, where would Mercy be? Allah is gracious; but if the poor sinner must earn his grace by works, then no grace is it indeed. But on the other hand, God is responsible for the sin in the world: God rolls that merciless «wheel of Fate» which so inexorably crushes the king on his throne and the ant on the ant-hill. What complaints he utters about that rolling orb!

«The wheel on high, still busied with despite,
Will ne'er unloose a wretch from his sad plight;
But when it lights upon a smitten heart,
Straightway essays another blow to smite.

«Dark wheel! how many lovers hast thou slain
Like Mahmud and Ayaz, O inhumane!
Come, let us drink! thou grantest not two lives;
When one is spent, we find it not again.»

The bitter fatalism, worthy of Koheleth, soon translates itself into practical acceptance of all the good things of earth:—

«In the sweet Spring a grassy bank I sought,
And thither wine and a fair Houri brought;
And though the people called me graceless dog,
Gave not to Paradise another thought.

«Life void of wine and minstrels with their lutes,
And the soft murmurs of Irakian flutes,
Were nothing worth: I scan the world and see,
Save pleasure, life yields only bitter fruits.

«O soul! lay up all earthly goods in store;
Thy mead with pleasure's flowerets spangle o'er;
And know 'tis all as dew that decks the flowers
For one short night, and then is seen no more!

«Like tulips in the Spring your cups lift up,
And with a tulip-cheeked companion sup
With joy your wine, or e'er this azure wheel
With some unlooked-for blast upset your cup.»

The Prophet promises for the Faithful in the Paradise to come, multiplied joys: feasts of many courses, rivers running with wine and milk, and exquisite Houris, star-eyed maidens with bodies made of musk or saffron; but Omar says if those things are to be in the world to come, then surely it is right to enjoy their counterparts on earth. He invites us to the tavern, there to forget the sorrows of life; he comes forth from the tavern to mock at the hypocritical sages who in reality envy him his freedom.

A recent writer, James A. Murray, in the Fortnightly Review, eloquently pictures one phase of Omar's poetry:—

«Behind this joyous life lies the very shadow of death. Omar entreats his mistress to pour wine for him while she can, before the potters make vessels from their dust; to love him while the light is in her eyes and the laughter in her voice. It is the old sorrow for the dead, made personal and thereby increased in poignancy and pathos. The lion and the lizard haunt the courts of Jamshed's splendor, the wild ass stamps above the head of Bahram; birds wail over the skull of Kai Kawus, potters mold upon their wheels the ashes of Faridun and Kai Khosru. Those delicate lithe curves were once the more perfect lines of a human body; the glass, the goblet, that one may break in carelessness, thrills with the anguish of a living creature. In like manner Omar prays that when he is dead he may be ground to dust, and mingled into clay with wine, and molded to a stopper for the wine-jar's mouth. For all men have a regeneration which is sometimes beautiful and sometimes base. Roses and tulips spring from the dust of monarchs; beneath purple violets, dark ladies are laid. And still that pitiful refrain continues: of what avail is it, when men are dead, and do not feel or see or hear? It is the spirit of a most noble Hellenic epitaph, strangely distant from the Greeks in its unrestraint:—‹We, the dead, are only bones and ashes: waste no precious ointments or wreaths upon our tomb, for it is only marble; kindle no funeral pyre, for it is useless extravagance. If you have anything to give, give it while I am alive; but if you steep ashes in wine you only make mud, for the dead man does not drink.›

«And now the dust of Omar, as that of all men, brings forth flowers: ‹God knows,› he says, ‹for whom.› For whom? To-day travelers from all countries make pilgrimage to the sepulchre in that soft garden where he rests. The splendid heaven of Nishápúr is over him; the cool earth embraces him; brown stems, crowned heavily with white and crimson blossom, rise from his ashes, and drop blown petals on his tomb. The ringdove murmurs in that low full-throated moan whose significance is sculptured over the ruins of Persepolis,—the lament for strong dead men and imperious queens. But the dawn is as triumphant, the incense-wind as sweet, the gardens flower-laden, as when Omar knew them more than nine hundred years ago.»

But was the grave astronomer the wine-bibber and voluptuary that he paints himself? Must we not read into his praise of the wine-cup and the narcissus-eyed Cup-bearer with his or her slender cypress form, Oriental images meant to convey a deep esoteric meaning? Are not his more serious verses safer tests of his real thought?

«Whilom, ere youth's conceit had waned, methought
Answers to all life's problems I had wrought;
But now, grown old and wise, too late I see
My life is spent, and all my lore is naught.

«Let him rejoice who has a loaf of bread,
A little nest wherein to lay his head,
Is slave to none, and no man slaves for him,—
In truth his lot is wondrous well bestead.

«Sooner with half a loaf contented be,
And water from a broken crock, like me,
Than lord it over one poor fellow-man,
Or to another bow the vassal knee.»

But in contemplating all these poems,—and there are a thousand and more attributed to Omar Khayyám, many of them only replicas and variations of certain themes: complaints of Fate and the world's injustice, satires on the hypocrisy and impiety of the pious, love poems, Rubáiyát in praise of spring and flowers, addresses to Allah either in humility or in reproach, and everlasting reiteration of the old Biblical «Eat and drink, for to-morrow you die,»—the question comes, how many were really written by Omar himself. Those attributed to him are differentiated from the great mass of Persian verse by their lack of florid ornamentation and arabesque, by their stately simplicity.

Owing to his unpopularity as a heretic, comparatively few manuscripts have come down to us, and there is no undoubted text. The first known translation is of one quatrain, which exists in Arabic and in Latin. Professor E. B. Cowell was the first to make known to English readers the wealth of his poetic and philosophic thought.

But as his prose versions and comments appeared in a magazine published in India, it excited little attention. It was through Edward Fitzgerald that he became generally known to the English-speaking world. For some time it was thought that the quatrains were of English origin; but at last the truth was told. A new impulse was given to the interest in Omar Khayyám by the publication, in 1884, of the superb illustrations by Elihu Vedder, which interpreted the text in the true Oriental and epicurean spirit. These illustrations are not slavish reproductions of the text, but rather a parallel poem, in keeping with it. Faithful service to the poet also was performed in Germany by Baron von Hammer-Purgstall, by Graf von Schack, and by Friedrich von Bodenstedt; in France by Garcin de Tassy, and by J. B. Nicolas. Besides Fitzgerald's rendering, English versions, prose and verse, more or less complete, have been made by Justin Huntly McCarthy, E. H. Whinfield (whose translations are used in this sketch), and others. There are also Hungarian and Norwegian versions, and an edition in the original has been published in St. Petersburg.

The modernness of Omar's spirit, his view of the world, half pessimistic and half defiant, his good humor and good cheer, his wit and bonhomie, all make him appeal to a very wide circle of nineteenth-century readers. They find in him echoes of their own doubts and questionings; they too look upon the universe as the plaything of a Fate which they cannot pretend to explain or change; and they too somehow complacently feel that the Power above them «is a good Fellow» who will not without cause damn them to the Prophet's Hell. At the same time they recognize the claims of the perfect life.

Well sings old Omar in more serious mood,—
Or else some critic of the Mollah brood,—
«In all this changing world whereat I gaze,
Save Goodness only there is nothing good.»

N. H. Dole

RUBÁIYÁT

I

Wake! for the Sun, who scattered into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives Night along with them from Heaven, and strikes
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

II

Before the phantom of False morning died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
"When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshiper outside?"

III

And as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—"Open then the Door!
"You know how little while we have to stay,
And once departed, may return no more."

IV

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the White Hand of Moses on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

V

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's Seven-ringed Cup where no one knows;
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

VI

And David's lips are lockt; but in divine
High-piping Pehleví, with "Wine! Wine! Wine!
Red Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the Rose,
That sallow cheek of hers t' incarnadine.

VII

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

VIII

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,—
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

IX

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say:
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

X

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?
Let Zál and Rustum bluster as they will,
Or Hátim call to Supper—heed not you.

XI

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot—
And Peace to Mahmúd on his golden Throne!

XII

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

XIII

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come:
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

XIV

Look to the blowing Rose about us—"Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,
At once the silken tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

XV

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turned
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

XVI

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes — or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two — is gone.

XVII

Think, in this battered Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

XVIII

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahrám, that great Hunter — the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

XIX

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

XX

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean —
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

XXI

Ah, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
TO-DAY of past Regrets and future Fears:
To-morrow! — Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Seven thousand Years.

XXII

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

XXIII

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend — ourselves to make a Couch — for whom?

XXIV

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and — sans End!

XXV

Alike for those who for TO-DAY prepare,
And those that after some TO-MORROW stare,
A Muezzín from the Tower of Darkness cries,
"Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There."

XXVI

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the Two Worlds so wisely — they are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scattered, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

XXVII

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same door wherein I went.

XXVIII

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reaped —
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

XXIX

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing,
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence?*
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

XXXI

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate:
And many a Knot unraveled by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

XXXII

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I might not see.
Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was—and then no more of THEE and ME.

XXXIII

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs revealed
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

XXXIV

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
As from Without—"THE ME WITHIN THEE BLIND!"

XXXV

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
I leaned, the Secret of my Life to learn;
And Lip to Lip it murmured—"While you live,
Drink!—for once dead, you never shall return."

XXXVI

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answered, once did live,
   And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kissed,
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

XXXVII

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
   And with its all-obliterated Tongue
It murmured—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

XXXVIII

And has not such a Story from of Old
Down Man's successive generations rolled
   Of such a clod of saturated Earth
Cast by the Maker into Human mold?

XXXIX

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
For Earth to drink of, but may steal below
   To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
There hidden—far beneath, and long ago.

XL

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
Of Heavenly Vintage from the soil looks up,
   Do you devoutly do the like, till Heaven
To Earth invert you—like an empty Cup.

XLI

Perplext no more with Human or Divine,
To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
   And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

XLII

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes;
   Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTERDAY
You were—TO-MORROW you shall not be less.

XLIII

So when that Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
   And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff — you shall not shrink.

XLIV

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
   Were't not a Shame — were't not a Shame for him
In this clay carcass crippled to abide?

XLV

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one day's rest
A Sultán to the realm of Death addrest;
   The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

XLVI

And fear not lest Existence, closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
   The Eternal Sákí from that Bowl has poured
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

XLVII

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last,
   Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

XLVIII

A Moment's Halt — a momentary taste
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste —
   And Lo! — the phantom Caravan has reached
The NOTHING it set out from — Oh, make haste!

XLIX

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About THE SECRET — quick about it, Friend!
   A Hair perhaps divides the False and True —
And upon what, prithee, may life depend?

L

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue —
Could you but find it — to the Treasure-house
And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

LI

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins
Running Quicksilver-like, eludes your pains;
Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi; and
They change and perish all — but He remains:

LII

A moment guessed — then back behind the Fold
Immerst of Darkness round the Drama rolled
Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

LIII

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heaven's unopening Door,
You gaze TO-DAY, while You are You — how then
TO-MORROW, when You shall be You no more?

LIV

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavor and dispute;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

LV

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

LVI

For «Is» and «IS-NOT» though with Rule and Line
And «UP-AND-DOWN» by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but — Wine.

LVII

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Reduced the Year to better reckoning?—Nay,
'Twas only striking from the Calendar
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

LVIII

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

LIX

The Grape, that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute;
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute;

LX

The mighty Mahmúd, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

LXI

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

LXII

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup—when crumbled into Dust!

LXIII

Oh, threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain—*This* Life flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies:
The Flower that once has blown forever dies.

LXIV

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

LXV

The Revelations of Devout and Learned
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burned,
Are all but Stories, which awoke from Sleep
They told their comrades, and to Sleep returned.

LXVI

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell;
And by-and-by my Soul returned to me,
And answered, "I Myself am Heaven and Hell:"

LXVII

Heaven but the Vision of fulfilled Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

LXVIII

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with the Sun-illumined Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

LXIX

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

LXX

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;
And He that tossed you down into the Field,
He knows about it all — HE knows — HE knows!

LXXI

The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

LXXII

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die,
 Lift not your hands to *It* for help — for It
As impotently moves as you or I.

LXXIII

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sowed the Seed;
 And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

LXXIV

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
TO-MORROW'S Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
 Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why;
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

LXXV

I tell you this — When, started from the Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
 Of Heaven Parwín and Mushtarí they flung,
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

LXXVI

The Vine had struck a fibre; which about
If clings my Being — let the Dervish flout:
 Of my Base metal may be filed a Key
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

LXXVII

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
 One Flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

LXXVIII

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

LXXIX

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what He lent him dross-allayed—
Sue for a Debt he never did contract,
And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!

LXXX

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

LXXXI

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And e'en with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blackened—Man's forgiveness give—and take!

* * *

LXXXII

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

LXXXIII

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall:
And some loquacious Vessels were; and some
Listened, perhaps, but never talked at all.

LXXXIV

Said one among them—"Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
And to this Figure molded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

LXXXV

Then said a Second—«Ne'er a peevish Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy;
And He that with his hand the Vessel made
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy.»

LXXXVI

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make:—
«They sneer at me for leaning all awry:
What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?»

LXXXVII

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot—
I think a Súfi pipkin—waxing hot—
«All this of Pot and Potter—Tell me, then,
Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?»

LXXXVIII

«Why,» said another, «Some there are who tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
The luckless Pots he marred in making—Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well.»

LXXXIX

«Well,» murmured one, «Let whoso make or buy,
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry;
But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by-and-by.»

XC

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
The little Moon looked in that all were seeking:
And then they jogged each other, «Brother! Brother!
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking!»

XCI

Ah, with the Grape my fading life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

XCII

That e'en my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air,
As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

XCIII

Indeed, the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in this World much wrong:
Have drowned my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

XCIV

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore — but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My threadbare Penitence apieces tore.

XCV

And much as Wine has played the Infidel,
And robbed me of my Robe of Honor — Well,
I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

XCVI

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

XCVII

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse — if dimly, yet indeed revealed,
To which the fainting Traveler might spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

XCVIII

Would but some wingèd Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

XCIX

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Remold it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

* * *

C

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again —
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden — and for *one* in vain!

CI

And when like her, O Sákí, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One — turn down an empty Glass!

Version of Edward Fitzgerald: fifth edition.

ADDITIONAL RUBÁIYÁT

[These are verses from earlier editions which Fitzgerald either transformed or dropped in others, and one which he never included in his «Eclogue» scheme; but which seem too beautiful or too quaint not to be given.]

I

Opening Verses of the First Edition

AWAKE! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight:*
And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.

Dreaming when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky
I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,
«Awake, my little ones, and fill the Cup
Before Life's Liquor in its cup be dry.»

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* «Flinging a Stone into the Cup was the signal for 'To Horse!' in the Desert.» — FITZGERALD.

II

Stanza xxxvii. of the First Edition

AH, FILL the Cup: what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:
   Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday,
Why fret about them if To-day be sweet?

III

Stanza lxiv. of the First Edition

SAID one,—« Folks of a surly Tapster tell,
And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell:
   They talk of some strict Testing of us—Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well.»

IV

Stanza xiv. of the Second Edition

WERE it not Folly, Spider-like to spin
The Thread of present Life away to win—
   What? for ourselves, who know not if we shall
Breathe out the very Breath we now breathe in!

V

Stanza lxv. of the Second Edition

IF BUT the Vine- and Love-abjuring Band
Are in the Prophet's Paradise to stand,
   Alack I doubt the Prophet's Paradise
Were empty as the hollow of one's Hand.

VI

Verse given among Fitzgerald's notes to the 'Rubáiyát,' but not included in the body of the text

BE OF Good Cheer: the Sullen Month will die,
And a young Moon requite us by-and-by:
   Look how the Old one, meagre, bent, and wan
With Age and Fast, is Fainting from the Sky!

ALEXANDER KIELLAND

(1849–)

Alexander Kielland, one of the foremost of the living authors of Norway, belongs in Norwegian literature to the generation subsequent to Björnson, Ibsen, and Lie, the three great names that most readily recur among the contemporary writers of his native country. In point of fact, he has very little in common with them or their predecessors, but in many ways marks a new tendency in the literature of Norway, which in its most recent development owes not a little to his incentive. In this attitude he and his immediate contemporary Arne Garborg, though direct antitheses in some respects, here stand together,—an intermediate development between the oldest and the newest phases of that extraordinary literature that has attracted to it the attention of the world.

Alexander Kielland

Kielland was born in 1849, in Stavanger, Norway. His father was a ship-owner and merchant of abundant means and social position, as had been his ancestors for generations before him. At the University of Christiania he studied law, which however he never practiced, although he duly took his examination at the end of the course. Instead he chose at the outset a business career; and bought a brick and tile factory at Malk, near Stavanger, which he managed with ability until 1881, when it was sold to a stock company.

His first literary work saw the light under these conditions. His career began with a series of short stories, which appeared anonymously in the Christiania Dagblad. These first tales, with others written subsequently, went to make up the material of his first two books, ‘Novelletter’ (1879), and ‘Nye Novelletter’ (1880).

Several winters spent in Paris, and the study of modern French literature, established the characteristic tendency of his genius. Many of his novelettes and short stories are so essentially French in method and manner, that except for their environment they might equally well have been the product of French soil. To associate him with Daudet is natural and inevitable; for in his point of view and treatment of material he most resembles that great master of short stories, Kielland's use of the Norwegian language is a revelation, and it flows from his pen in incisive and often sparkling sentences. No one ever before has used the language as he uses it. In his hands it is a medium of the utmost clarity, and transmits every delicate shade of meaning. It lends itself readily to translation, but very little has as yet found its way into English. ‘Garman and Worse’ has been translated by W. W. Kettlewell (London, 1885), ‘Skipper Worse’ by the Earl of Ducie (London, 1885), and William Archer has translated a number of short stories which have been published under the title of ‘Tales of Two Countries’ (1891).

Kielland's first novel, ‘Garman and Worse’ (1880), demonstrated his seriousness of purpose. It is a social study of *bourgeois* life in the towns of the western coast of Norway, and treats of types of character with which the author has all his life been familiar. Inevitably it is autobiographical, particularly in the incidents of the boyhood of Gabriel Garman. A faithful picture of the life of a small Norwegian town, it is full of clever satire and humorous delineation.

Discontent with existing social conditions ramifying in various directions is the psychological element in most of Kielland's novels. Kielland's second novel, ‘Laboring People’ (1881), is the pathology as well as the psychology of vice, and treats of the corrupting influence of the upper classes upon the lower. The horrors of the subject are not disguised; and from this book it may be understood why Georg Brandes, in his brilliant essay upon Kielland, should trace in his writings the influence of Balzac and Zola. In point of structure and composition ‘Skipper Worse’ ranks among the best of his novels; and here as always there is the suggestion of Daudet, for the theme of the story — a study of Pietism in Norway — is similar to that of ‘L'Évangéliste.’ His strength and earnestness are nowhere better exemplified than in this psychological study.

Kielland's development has been uniform and steady, and his recent work shows an immense increase in power. His later books all indicate the trend of his socialistic tendency. ‘Snow’ is a protest against blind orthodoxy. The wintry Norwegian landscape is symbolical of the icy fetters of tradition, but there is a hint and promise of spring. In ‘Jacob,’ however, pessimism settles like a heavy fog, rayless and dispiriting. It is a revolt against senseless optimism and poetic justice, and a plea for what he believes to be reality. Kielland's characteristic is the spirit of liberalism in politics, ethics, and religion. Of aristocratic social connections, a conservative by birth and education, Kielland is the champion of democracy. So outspoken is he, indeed, that the government itself, through a committee appointed to investigate his claims to the customary literary pension, has protested against a literature "opposed to the prevailing moral and religious ideas of the nation," and refused to sanction his writings by granting the stipend petitioned by his friends. As a compensation, his popularity with the people is unbounded; and in spite of the frowns of the government, he has virtually remained master of the field.

AT THE FAIR

From 'Tales of Two Countries.' Copyright 1891, by Harper & Brothers

It was by the merest chance that Monsieur and Madame Tousseau came to Saint-Germain-en-Laye in the early days of September.

Four weeks ago they had been married in Lyons, which was their home; but where they had passed these four weeks they really could not have told you. The time had gone hop-skip-and-jump: a couple of days had entirely slipped out of their reckoning; and on the other hand they remembered a little summer-house at Fontainebleau, where they had rested one evening, as clearly as if they had passed half their lives there.

Paris was, strictly speaking, the goal of their wedding journey, and there they established themselves in a comfortable little *hôtel garni.* But the city was sultry, and they could not rest; so they rambled about among the small towns in the neighborhood, and found themselves one Sunday at noon in Saint-Germain.

« Monsieur and Madame have doubtless come to take part in the fête? » said the plump little landlady of the Hotel Henri Quatre, as she ushered her guests up the steps.

The fête? They knew of no fête in the world except their own wedded happiness; but they did not say so to the landlady.

They soon learned that they had been lucky enough to drop into the very midst of the great and celebrated fair which is held every year, on the first Sunday of September, in the Forest of Saint-Germain.

The young couple were highly delighted with their good hap. It seemed as though Fortune followed at their heels, or rather ran ahead of them, to arrange surprises. After a delicious tête-à-tête dinner behind one of the clipped yew-trees in the quaint garden, they took a carriage and drove off to the forest.

In the hotel garden, beside the little fountain in the middle of the lawn, sat a ragged condor which the landlord had bought to amuse his guests. It was attached to its perch by a good strong rope. But when the sun shone upon it with real warmth, it fell a-thinking of the snow-peaks of Peru, of mighty wing-strokes over the deep valleys — and then it forgot the rope.

Two vigorous strokes with its pinions would bring the rope up taut, and it would fall back upon the sward. There it would lie by the hour, then shake itself and clamber up to its little perch again.

When it turned its head to watch the happy pair, Madame Tousseau burst into a fit of laughter at its melancholy mien.

The afternoon sun glimmered through the dense foliage of the interminable straight-ruled avenue that skirts the terrace. The young wife's veil fluttered aloft as they sped through the air, and wound itself right around Monsieur's head. It took a long time to put it in order again, and Madame's hat had to be adjusted ever so often. Then came the relighting of Monsieur's cigar, and that too was quite a business, — for Madame's fan would always give a suspicious little flirt every time the match was lighted; then a penalty had to be paid, and that again took time.

The aristocratic English family which was passing the summer at Saint-Germain was disturbed in its regulation walk by the passing of the gay little equipage. They raised their correct gray or blue eyes; there was neither contempt nor annoyance in their look — only the faintest shade of surprise. But the condor followed the carriage with its eyes until it became a mere black speck at the vanishing-point of the straight-ruled interminable avenue.

« La joyeuse fête des Loges » is a genuine fair, with gingerbread cakes, sword-swallowers, and waffles piping hot. As the evening falls, colored lamps and Chinese lanterns are lighted around the venerable oak which stands in the middle of the fair-ground, and boys climb about among its topmost branches with maroons and Bengal lights.

Gentlemen of an inventive turn of mind go about with lanterns on their hats, on their sticks, and wherever they can possibly hang; and the most inventive of all strolls around with his sweetheart under a great umbrella, with a lantern dangling from each rib.

On the outskirts, bonfires are lighted; fowls are roasted on spits, while potatoes are cut into slices and fried in drippings. Each aroma seems to have its amateurs, for there are always people crowding round; but the majority stroll up and down the long street of booths.

Monsieur and Madame Tousseau had plunged into all the fun of the fair. They had gambled in the most lucrative lottery in Europe, presided over by a man who excelled in dubious witticisms. They had seen the fattest goose in the world, and the celebrated flea, «Bismarck,» who could drive six horses. Furthermore they had purchased gingerbread, shot at a target for clay pipes and soft-boiled eggs, and finally had danced a waltz in the spacious dancing-tent.

They had never had such fun in their lives. There were no great people there — at any rate, none greater than themselves. As they did not know a soul, they smiled to every one; and when they met the same person twice they laughed and nodded to him.

They were charmed with everything. They stood outside the great circus and ballet marquees and laughed at the shouting buffoons. Scraggy mountebanks performed on trumpets, and young girls with well-floured shoulders smiled alluringly from the platforms.

Monsieur Tousseau's purse was never at rest; but they did not grow impatient of the perpetual claims upon it. On the contrary, they only laughed at the gigantic efforts these people would make, to earn perhaps half a franc, or a few centimes.

Suddenly they encountered a face they knew. It was a young American whom they had met at the hotel in Paris.

«Well, Monsieur Whitmore!» cried Madame Tousseau gayly, «here at last you've found a place where you can't possibly help enjoying yourself.»

«For my part,» answered the American slowly, «I find no enjoyment in seeing the people who haven't money making fools of themselves to please the people who have.»

«Oh, you're incorrigible!» laughed the young wife. «But I must compliment you on the excellent French you are speaking to-day.»

After exchanging a few more words they lost each other in the crowd: Mr. Whitmore was going back to Paris immediately.

Madame Tousseau's compliment was quite sincere. As a rule the grave American talked deplorable French; but the answer he had made to Madame was almost correct. It seemed as though it had been well thought out in advance — as though a whole series of impressions had condensed themselves into these words. Perhaps that was why his answer sank so deep into the minds of Monsieur and Madame Tousseau.

Neither of them thought it a particularly brilliant remark; on the contrary, they agreed that it must be miserable to take so gloomy a view of things. But nevertheless his words left something rankling. They could not laugh so lightly as before; Madame felt tired, and they began to think of getting homewards.

Just as they turned to go down the long street of booths in order to find their carriage, they met a noisy crew coming upward.

« Let us take the other way, » said Monsieur.

They passed between two booths, and emerged at the back of one of the rows. They stumbled over the tree-roots before their eyes got used to the uncertain light which fell in patches between the tents. A dog which lay gnawing at something or other rose with a snarl, and dragged its prey further into the darkness among the trees.

On this side the booths were made up of old sails and all sorts of strange draperies. Here and there light shone through the openings, and at one place Madame distinguished a face she knew.

It was the man who had sold her that incomparable gingerbread — Monsieur had half of it still in his pocket.

But it was curious to see the gingerbread-man from this side. Here was something quite different from the smiling obsequiousness which had said so many pretty things to her pretty face, and had been so unwearied in belauding the gingerbread — which really was excellent.

Now he sat crouched together, eating some indescribable mess out of a checked pocket-handkerchief — eagerly, greedily, without looking up.

Farther down they heard a muffled conversation. Madame was bent upon peeping in; Monsieur objected, but had to give in.

An old mountebank sat counting a handful of coppers, grumbling and growling the while. A young girl stood before him, shivering and pleading for pardon; she was wrapped in a long waterproof.

The man swore and stamped on the ground. Then she threw off the waterproof and stood half naked in a sort of ballet costume. Without saying a word, and without smoothing her hair or preening her finery, she mounted the little steps that led to the stage.

At that moment she turned and looked at her father. Her face had already put on the ballet simper, but it now gave place to a quite different expression. The mouth remained fixed, but the eyes tried for a second to send him a beseeching smile. The mountebank shrugged his shoulders, and held out his hand with the coppers; the girl turned, ducked under the curtain, and was received with shouts and applause.

Beside the great oak-tree the lottery man was holding forth as fluently as ever. His witticisms, as the darkness thickened, grew less and less dubious. There was a different ring, too, in the laughter of the crowd; the men were noisier, the mountebanks leaner, the women more brazen, the music falser — so it seemed at least to Madame and Monsieur.

As they passed the dancing-tent the racket of a quadrille reached their ears. « Great heavens! — was it really there that we danced? » said Madame, and nestled closer to her husband.

They made their way through the rout as quickly as they could; they would soon reach their carriage,— it was just beyond the circus marquee. It would be nice to rest and escape from all this hubbub.

The platform in front of the circus marquee was now vacant. Inside, in the dim and stifling rotunda, the performance was in full swing.

Only the old woman who sold the tickets sat asleep at her desk. And a little way off, in the light of her lamp, stood a tiny boy.

He was dressed in tights, green on one side, red on the other; on his head he had a fool's cap with horns.

Close up to the platform stood a woman wrapped in a black shawl. She seemed to be talking to the boy.

He advanced his red leg and his green leg by turns, and drew them back again. At last he took three steps forward on his meagre shanks and held out his hand to the woman.

She took what he had in it, and disappeared into the darkness.

He stood motionless for a moment, then he muttered some words and burst into tears.

Presently he stopped, and said, « Maman m'a pris mon sou! » and fell to weeping again.

He dried his eyes and left off for a time, but as often as he repeated to himself his sad little history — how his mother had taken his sou from him — he was seized with another and a bitterer fit of weeping.

He stooped and buried his face in the curtain. The stiff, wrinkly oil painting must be hard and cold to cry into. The little body shrank together; he drew his green leg close up under him, and stood like a stork upon the red one.

No one on the other side of the curtain must hear that he was crying. Therefore he did not sob like a child, but fought as a man fights against a broken heart.

When the attack was over, he blew his nose with his fingers, and wiped them on his tights. With the dirty curtain he had dabbled the tears all over his face until it was streaked with black; and in this guise, and dry-eyed, he gazed for a moment over the fair.

Then: « Maman m'a pris mon sou » — and he set off again.

The back-sweep of the wave leaves the beach dry for an instant while the next wave is gathering. Thus sorrow swept in heavy surges over the little childish heart.

His dress was so ludicrous, his body so meagre, his weeping was so woefully bitter, and his suffering so great and man-like —

But at home at the hotel — the Pavillon Henri Quatre, where the Queens of France condescended to be brought to bed — there the condor sat and slept upon its perch.

And it dreamed its dream — its only dream — its dream about the snow-peaks of Peru and the mighty wing-strokes over the deep valleys; and then it forgot its rope.

It uplifted its ragged pinions vigorously, and struck two sturdy strokes. Then the rope drew taut, and it fell back where it was wont to fall — it wrenched its claw, and the dream vanished. —

Next morning the aristocratic English family was much concerned, and the landlord himself felt annoyed; for the condor lay dead upon the grass.

Translation of William Archer.

GRACE ELIZABETH KING

(1858–)

In 1886 there appeared in the New Princeton Review a story called ‘Monsieur Motte,’ which attracted instant attention in this country as in England, and subsequently in France, and announced that America had a new writer who would add distinction to its literature. The story dealt with a certain social phase in the life of New Orleans; it had a touch of Gallic quality, and was a subtle reading of Creole character and of the negro race also; but otherwise it had the note of universality which is found in all genuine original literature.

Grace Elizabeth King

The writer was Grace Elizabeth King of New Orleans, the daughter of William M. King, during his life a prominent lawyer, and before the war a sugar planter in Louisiana. Miss King passed her childhood in the city and upon her father's plantation, and was educated in the French schools of New Orleans. It is evident from her writings that she was a keen observer of country and city life, and a close student of human nature. New Orleans, when she was a child, had more affiliations with Paris than with New York, and her education was decidedly French; indeed, it may be said that her sympathy for French literature and her comprehension of it were so strong and native, that when lately she made a considerable sojourn in the French capital she did not seem to be in a foreign atmosphere. To her knowledge of French she added an almost equal facility in Spanish; so that she was well equipped for both the investigation and interpretation of the history and romance of Louisiana.

Her first success was followed by several short novels and stories: ‘Bonne Maman,’ ‘Earthlings,’ ‘Balcony Stories,’ some of which were collected in a volume called ‘Tales of a Time and Place.’ The ‘Balcony Stories’ were exquisite and subtle creations, and revealed in the author an art, a finish in form, and a refined literary quality which we are accustomed in criticism to call Parisian. No better work in this sort has been done by any modern writer.

It was natural that Miss King, who is an enthusiastic and accurate student, should be attracted to the dramatic and romantic history of the lower Mississippi. The first results of this study were a life of Bienville, the founder of New Orleans; a school history of Louisiana, in collaboration with Professor Fichlin of Tulane University; and a volume on New Orleans, a sort of personal tribute to her beloved city. At this writing she is engaged on a life of De Soto, and as a member of the Louisiana Historical Society is doing excellent work in original research. While she is likely to increase her reputation as a local historian, it is easy to predict that her strong constructive imagination and her bent for fiction will lead her to make use of her knowledge of early Louisiana for a romance, or for romances, that will truly interpret the achievements and chivalry of the early adventurers on our southwest coast. This abundant material for historical novels of a high order she is already trained to handle.

The short stories of Miss King reveal a rare literary artist, and many of them a power of depicting passion and the actualities of life transmuted into ideal pictures by her genius of sympathy. They would be marred unless given entire; and we have preferred to present in this volume a brilliant description of an episode in American history, which has never been so picturesquely and adequately set forth.

THE GLORIOUS EIGHTH OF JANUARY

From ‹New Orleans, the Place and the People.› Copyright 1895, by Macmillan & Co. Reprinted by permission of the author and publishers

It was on the morning of the 2d of December, 1814, as our preferred chronicler of this period, Alexander Walker, relates, that General Jackson and escort trotted their horses up the road that leads from Spanish Fort to the city. On arriving at the junction of Canal Carondelet and Bayou St. John, the party dismounted before an old Spanish villa, the residence of one of the prominent bachelor citizens of the day; where, in the marble-paved hall, breakfast had been prepared for them,—a breakfast such as luxury then could command from Creole markets and cooks, for a guest whom one wished to honor. But, the story goes, the guest of honor partook—and that sparingly—only of hominy. This reached a certain limit of endurance. At a whisper from a servant, the host excused himself, left the table, and passed into the antechamber. He was accosted by his fair friend and neighbor who had volunteered her assistance for the occasion.

"Ah, my friend, how could you play such a trick upon me? You asked me to prepare your house to receive a great general.

I did so. And I prepared a splendid breakfast. And now! I find that my labor is all thrown away upon an old 'Kaintuck' flatboatman, instead of a great general with plumes, epaulettes, long sword, and mustache."

Indeed, to female eyes, trained upon a Galvez, a Carondelet, a Casa Calvo, Andrew Jackson must have represented indeed a very unsatisfactory commandant-general. His dress — a small leathern cap, a short blue Spanish cloak, frayed trousers, worn and rusty high-top boots — was deficient; and even for a flatboatman, threadbare. But his personality, to equitable female eyes, should have been impressive if not pleasing: a tall, gaunt, inflexibly erect figure; a face sallow, it is true, and seamed and wrinkled with the burden of heavy thought, but expressing to the full the stern decision and restless energy which seemed the very soul of the man; heavy brows shaded his fierce bright eyes, and iron-gray hair bristled thick over his head.

From the villa the party trotted up the Bayou Road to its intersection with the city, where stood a famous landmark in old times: the residence of General Daniel Clarke, a great American in the business and political world of the time. Here carriages awaited them, and a formal delegation of welcome,— all the notabilities, civil and military, the city afforded, headed by Governor Claiborne and the mayor of the city: a group which, measured by after achievements, could not be considered inconsiderable either in number or character.

General Jackson, who talked as he fought — by nature — and had as much use for fine words as for fine clothes, answered the stately eloquence addressed him, briefly and to the point. He had come to protect the city, and he would drive the enemy into the sea or perish in the attempt. It was the eloquence for the people and the time. As an interpreter repeated the words in French, they passed from lip to lip, rousing all the energy they conveyed. They sped with Jackson's carriage into the city, where heroism has ever been most infectious; and the crowd that ran after him through the streets to see him alight, and to cheer the flag unfurled from his headquarters on Royal Street, expressed not so much the conviction that the savior of the city was there in that house, as that the savior of the city was there in every man's soul.

That evening the "Kaintuck" flatboatman was again subjected to the ordeal of woman's eyes. A dinner party of the most fashionable society had already assembled at a prominent and distinguished house, when the host announced to his wife that he had invited General Jackson to join them. She, as related by a descendant, did what she could under the trying circumstances; and so well prepared her guests for the unexpected addition to their party, that the ladies kept their eyes fixed upon the door with the liveliest curiosity, expecting to see it admit nothing less than some wild man of the woods, some curious specimen of American Indian, in uniform. When it opened and General Jackson entered, grave, self-possessed, martial, urbane, their astonishment was not to be gauged. When the dinner was over and he had taken his leave, the ladies all exclaimed with one impulse to the hostess, «Is this your red Indian! Is this your wild man of the woods! He is a prince.»

From now on, the city was transformed into a martial camp. Every man capable of bearing arms was mustered into service. All the French *émigrés* in the community volunteered in the ranks, only too eager for another chance at the English. Prisoners in the Calaboose were released and armed. To the old original fine company of freemen of color another was added, formed of colored refugees from St. Domingo,—men who had sided with the whites in the revolution there. Lafitte, notwithstanding the breaking up and looting of his establishment at Barataria, made good his offer to the State by gathering his Baratarians from the Calaboose and their hiding-places, and organizing them into two companies under the command of Dominique You and Beluche. From the parishes came hastily gathered volunteers, in companies and singly. The African slaves, catching the infection, labored with might and main upon the fortifications ordered by Jackson; and even the domestic servants, it is recorded, burnished their masters' arms and prepared ammunition with the ardor of patriots. The old men were formed into a home guard and given the patrol of the city. Martial law was proclaimed. The reinforcements from the neighboring territories arrived: a fine troop of horse from Mississippi, under the gallant Hinds; and Coffee, with his ever-to-be-remembered brigade of «Dirty Shirts,» who after a march of eight hundred miles, answered Jackson's message to hasten by covering in two days the one hundred and fifty miles from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. At the levee, barges and flatboats landed the militia of Tennessee, under Carroll.

On the 10th of December, eight days after Jackson's arrival in the city, the British fleet entered Lake Borgne. In the harbor of Ship Island, in the pass between it and Cat Island, out to Chandeleur Islands, as far as the spy-glass could carry, the eye of the lookout saw; and saw British sails. Never before had so august a visitation honored these distant waters. The very names of the ships and of their commanders were enough to create a panic. The Tonnant, the heroic Tonnant, of eighty guns, captured from the French at the battle of the Nile, with Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane and Rear-Admiral Codrington; the Royal Oak, seventy-four guns, Rear-Admiral Malcolm; the Ramillies, under Sir Thomas Hardy, Nelson's friend; the Norge, the Bedford, the Asia, all seventy-four-gunners; the Armide, Sir Thomas Trowbridge; the Sea Horse, Sir James Alexander Gordon, fresh from the banks of the Potomac,—there were fifty sail, in all carrying over a thousand guns, commanded by the *élite* of the British navy, steered by West-Indian pilots, followed by a smaller fleet of transports, sloops, and schooners. It seemed only proper that with such ships and such an army as the ships carried, a full and complete list of civil officers should be sent out, to conduct the government of the country to be annexed to his Majesty's dominions,—revenue collectors, printers, clerks, with printing-presses and office paraphernalia. Merchant ships accompanied the squadron to carry home the spoils; and even many ladies, wives of the officers, came along to share in the glory and pleasure of the expedition. "I expect at this moment," remarked Lord Castlereagh in Paris almost at the exact date, "that most of the large seaport towns of America are laid in ashes; that we are in possession of New Orleans, and have command of all the rivers of the Mississippi Valley and the Lakes; and that the Americans are now little better than prisoners in their own country."

The city must indeed have appeared practically defenseless to any foe minded to take it. There was no fortification, properly speaking, at the Balise. Fort St. Philip, on the river below the city, was small, out of repair, badly equipped and poorly munitioned. Back of the city there was pretty, picturesque Spanish Fort, a military bauble; a hasty battery had been thrown up where Bayou Chef Menteur joins Bayou Gentilly; and further out, on the Rigolets, was the little mud fort of Petites Coquilles (now Fort Pike). As every bayou from lake to river was, in high water, a high-road to the city, these had been closed and rafted by order of the government; and by the same token, Bayou Manchac has remained closed ever since.

Vice-Admiral Cochrane promptly commenced his programme. Forty-five launches and barges, armed with carronades and manned by a thousand soldiers and sailors, were sent to clear the lakes of the American flag.

What the Americans called their fleet on the lakes consisted of six small gunboats, carrying thirty-five guns, commanded by Lieutenant T. Ap Catesby Jones. These had been sent by Commodore Patterson to observe the English fleet, and prevent if possible the landing of their troops. If pressed by a superior force, they were to fall back through the Rigolets upon Fort Petites Coquilles. In obeying his orders, Jones in vain tried to beat through the Rigolets, with the current against him; his boats were carried into the narrow channel between Malheureux Island and Point Clear, where they stuck in the mud. Jones anchored therefore in as close line as he could, across the channel; and after a spirited address to his force of one hundred and eighty-two men, awaited the attack.

It was about ten o'clock of a beautiful December morning. The early fog lifted to show the British halting for breakfast, gay, careless, and light-hearted as if on a picnic party. The surface of the lake was without a ripple, the blue heavens without a cloud. At a signal the advance was resumed. On the flotilla came, in the beautiful order and in the perfect line and time with which the sturdy English oarsmen had pulled it through the thirty-six miles, without pause or break, from Ship Island; each boat with its glittering brass carronade at its prow, its serried files of scarlet uniforms and dazzling crest of bayonets, and the six oars on each side flashing in and out of the water.

The American boats lay silent, quiet, apparently lifeless. Then a flash, a roar, and a shot went crashing through the scarlet line. With an answer from their carronades, the British barges leaped forward and clinched with the gunboats. It was musket to musket, pistol to pistol, cutlass to cutlass, man to man; with shouts and cries, taunts and imprecations, and the steady roar throughout of the American cannon, cutting with deadly aim into the open British barges, capsizing, sinking them,—the water spotting with struggling red uniforms.

Two of the American boats were captured, and their guns turned against the others; and the British barges closing in, the American crews one by one were beaten below their own decks and overpowered. By half-past twelve the British flag waved triumphant over Lake Borgne.

The British troops were forwarded in transports from the fleet to the Île des Pois, near the mouth of Pearl River: a bare little island and a desolate camp, where, with no tents, the men were drenched with dew and chilled with frosts during the night, and during the day parched with the sun; many died from it. From some fisherman it was learned that about fifty miles west of Île aux Pois there was a bayou that had not been closed and was not defended, and which was navigable by barges for twelve miles, where it joined a canal leading to a plantation on the river a few miles below the city. To test the accuracy of the information, Sir Alexander Cochrane dispatched a boat under charge of the Hon. Captain Spencer, son of the Earl of Spencer, to reconnoitre the route. Arrived at the Spanish fishermen's village on the banks of Bayou Bienvenu, the young captain and a companion, disguising themselves in the blue shirts and tarpaulins of fishermen, paddled in a pirogue through the bayou and canal (Villeré's), walked to the Mississippi, took a drink of its waters, surveyed the country, interviewed some negroes; and returned with the report that the route was not only practicable but easy.

Sixteen hundred men and two cannon were embarked immediately for the bayou. The sky was dark and lowering; heavy rains fell during the whole day; the fires of charcoal, which could be kept burning in daylight, were extinguished at night; and the sharp frost cramped the soldiers into numbness. A detail sent in advance on a reconnoissance surprised and captured four pickets, who were held at the mouth of the bayou until the flotilla came up to it. One of the prisoners, a Creole gentleman, was presented to Sir Alexander Cochrane, the British commander,—a rough-looking, white-haired old gentleman, dressed in plain and much-worn clothing; and to General Keane, a tall, youthful, black-whiskered man in military undress. Their shrewd cross-questioning extracted from the Creole only the false statement that Jackson's forces in the city amounted to twelve thousand men, and that he had stationed four thousand at English Turn. As the untruth had been preconcerted, it was confirmed by the other prisoners, and believed by the British officers.

At dawn the barges entered the bayou. The English sailors standing to their oars, pushed their heavy loads through the tortuous shallow water. By nine o'clock the detachment was safe on shore. "The place," writes the English authority, an officer during the campaign, "was as wild as it is possible to imagine. Gaze where we might, nothing could be seen except a huge marsh covered with tall reeds. The marsh became gradually less and less continuous, being intersected by wide spots of firm ground; the reeds gave place by degrees to wood, and the wood to inclosed fields."

The troops landed, formed into columns, and pushing after the guides and engineers, began their march. The advance was slow and toilsome enough to such novices in swamping. But cypresses, palmettos, cane-brakes, vines, and mire were at last worried through; the sun began to brighten the ground, and the front ranks, quickening their step, broke joyfully into an open field near the expected canal. Beyond a distant orange grove, the buildings of the Villeré plantation could be seen. Advancing rapidly along the side of the canal and under cover of the orange grove, a company gained the buildings, and spreading out, surrounded them. The surprise was absolute. Major Villeré and his brother, sitting on the front gallery of their residence, jumped from their chairs at the sight of the red-coats before them; their rush to the other side of the house only showed them that they were bagged.

Secured in one of his own apartments, under guard of British soldiers, the young Creole officer found in his reflections the spur to a desperate attempt to save himself and his race from a suspicion of disloyalty to the United States, which under the circumstances might easily be directed against them by the Americans. Springing suddenly through his guards, and leaping from a window, he made a rush for the high fence that inclosed the yard, throwing down the soldiers in his way. He cleared the fence at a bound, and ran across the open field that separated him from the forest. A shower of musket-balls fell around him. "Catch or kill him!" was shouted behind him. But the light, agile Creole, with the Creole hunter's training from infancy, was more than a match for his pursuers in such a race as that. He gained the woods, a swamp,—while they were crossing the field, spreading out as they ran to shut him in. He sprang over the boggy earth, into the swamp; until his feet, sinking deeper and deeper, clogged and stuck. The Britons were gaining; had reached the swamp. He could hear them panting and blowing, and the orders which made his capture inevitable. There was but one chance: he sprang up a cypress-tree, and strove for the thick moss and branches overhead. Half-way up, he heard a whimpering below. It was the voice of his dog, his favorite setter, whining, fawning, and looking up to him with all the pathos of brute fidelity. There was no choice; it was her life or his, and with his, perhaps the surprise and capture of the city. Dropping to the earth, he seized a billet of wood and aimed one blow between the setter's devoted eyes; with the tears in his own eyes, he used to relate. To throw the body to one side, snatch some brush over it, spring to the tree again, was the work of an instant. As he drew the moss around his crouching figure and stilled his hard breathing, the British floundered past. When they abandoned their useless search, he slid from his covert, pushed through the swamp to the next plantation, and carried the alarm at full speed to the city.

The British troops moved up the road along the levee, to the upper line of the plantation, and took their position in three columns. Headquarters were established in the Villeré residence, in the yard of which a small battery was thrown up. They were eight miles from the city and separated from it by fifteen plantations, large and small. By pushing forward, General Keane in two hours could have reached the city; and the battle of New Orleans would have taken place then and there, and most probably a different decision would have been wrested from victory. The British officers strongly urged this bold line of action; but Keane, believing the statement that General Jackson had an army of about fifteen thousand in New Orleans, a force double his own, feared being cut off from the fleet. He therefore concluded to delay his advance until the other divisions came up. This was on the twenty-third day of December.

«Gentlemen,» said Jackson to his aides and secretaries, at half-past one o'clock, when Villeré had finished his report, «the British are below: we must fight them to-night.»

He issued his orders summoning his small force from their various posts. Plauche's battalion was two miles away at Bayou St. John, Coffee five miles off at Avart's, the colored battalion at Gentilly. They were commanded to proceed immediately to Montreuil's plantation below the city, where they would be joined by the regulars. Commodore Patterson was directed to get the gunboat Carolina under way. As the Cathedral clock was striking three, from every quarter of the city troops were seen coming at a quickstep through the streets, each company with its own vernacular music, 'Yankee Doodle,' 'La Marseillaise,' 'Le Chant du Depart.' The ladies and children crowded the balconies and windows to wave handkerchiefs and applaud; the old men stood upon the banquettes waving their hats, and with more sorrow in eyes and heart over their impotence than age had ever yet wrung from them.

Jackson, on horseback, with the regulars drawn up at his right, waited at the gate of Fort St. Charles to review the troops as they passed. The artillery were already below, in possession of the road. The first to march down after them were Beale's Rifles,—or as New Orleans calls them, Beale's famous Rifles,—in their blue hunting-shirts and citizens' hats, their long-bores over their shoulders; sharpshooters and picked shots every one of them; all young, active, intelligent volunteers, from the best in the professional and business circles, asking but one favor, the post of danger. At a hand gallop, and with a cloud of dust, came Hinds's dragoons, delighting General Jackson by their gallant, dare-devil bearing. After them Jackson's companion in arms, the great Coffee, trotted at the head of his mounted gunmen, with their long hair and unshaved faces, in dingy woolen hunting-shirts, copperas-dyed trousers, coonskin caps, and leather belts stuck with hunting-knives and tomahawks. "Forward at a gallop!" was Coffee's order, after a word with General Jackson, and so they disappeared. Through a side street marched a gay, varied mass of color; men all of a size, but some mere boys in age, with the handsome, regular features, flashing eyes, and unmistakable martial bearing of the French. "Ah! here come the brave Creoles," cries Jackson; and Plauche's battalion, which had come in on a run from Bayou St. John, stepped gallantly by.

And after these, under their white commander, defiled the freemen of color, and then passed down the road a band of a hundred Choctaw Indians in their war paint; last of all, the regulars. Jackson still waited, until a small dark schooner left the opposite bank of the river and slowly moved down the current. This was the Carolina, under Commodore Patterson. Then Jackson clapped spurs to his horse, and followed by his aides, galloped after his army.

The veteran corps took the patrol of the now deserted streets. The ladies retired from balcony and window, with their brave smiles and fluttering handkerchiefs; and hastening to their respective posts, assembled in coteries to prepare lint and bandages, and cut and sew; for many of their defenders and Jackson's warriors had landed on the levee in a ragged if not destitute condition. Before Jackson left Fort St. Charles, a message had been sent to him from one of these coteries, asking what they were to do in case the city was attacked. «Say to the ladies,» he replied, «not to be uneasy. No British soldier shall ever enter the city as an enemy, unless over my dead body.»

As the rumored war-cry of the British was «Beauty and Booty,» many of the ladies, besides thimbles and needles, had provided themselves with small daggers, which they wore in their belts.

Here it is the custom of local pride to pause and enumerate the foes set in array against the men hastening down the levee road.

First, always, there was that model regiment the Ninety-third Highlanders, in their bright tartans and kilts; men chosen for stature and strength, whose broad breasts, wide shoulders, and stalwart figures widened their ranks into a formidable appearance. The Prince of Orange and his staff had journeyed from London to Plymouth to review them before they embarked. Then there were six companies of the Ninety-fifth Rifles; the famous Rifle Brigade of the Peninsular campaign; the Fourteenth Regiment, the Duchess of York's Light Dragoons; two West-Indian regiments, with artillery, rocket brigade, sapper and engineer corps—in all four thousand three hundred men, under command of Major-General John Keane, a young officer whose past reputation for daring and gallantry has been proudly kept bright by the traditions of his New Orleans foes. To these were added General Ross's three thousand men, fresh from their brilliant Baltimore and Washington raid. Choice troops they were: the gallant and distinguished Fourth, or King's Own; the Forty-fourth, East Essex Foot; the Eighty-fifth, Buck Volunteers, commanded by one of the most brilliant officers in the British service, Colonel William Thornton; the Twenty-first Royal, North British Fusileers,—with the exception of the Black Regiments and the Highlanders, all tried veterans, who had fought with Wellington through his Peninsular campaign, from the beginning to his triumphant entry into France.

Only the first boat loads, eighteen hundred men, were in Villeré's field on the afternoon of the twenty-third. They lay around their bivouac fires, about two hundred yards from the levee, enjoying their rest and the digestion of the bountiful supper of fresh meat, poultry, milk, eggs, and delicacies, which had been added to their rations by a prompt raid on the neighboring plantations. General Keane and Colonel Thornton paced the gallery of the Villeré house, glancing at each turn towards the wood, for the sight of the coming of the next division of the army.

The only hostile demonstration during the afternoon had been the firing of the outpost upon a reconnoitring squad of dragoons, and a bold dash down the road of a detachment of Hinds's horsemen,—who, after a cool, impudent survey of the British camp, had galloped away again under a volley from the Rifles.

Darkness gathered over the scene. The sentinels were doubled, and officers walked their rounds in watchful anxiety. About seven o'clock some of them observed a boat stealing slowly down the river. From her careless approach, they thought she must be one of their own cruisers which had passed the forts below and was returning from a reconnoissance of the river. She answered neither hail nor musket shot, but steered steadily on, veering in close ashore until her broadside was abreast of the camp. Then her anchor was let loose, and a loud voice was heard: «Give them this, for the honor of America.» A flash lighted the dark hulk, and a tornado of grape and musket shot swept the levee and field. It was the Carolina and Commodore Patterson: volley after volley followed with deadly rapidity and precision; the sudden and terrible havoc threw the camp into blind disorder. The men ran wildly to and fro seeking shelter, until Thornton ordered them to get under cover of the levee. There, according to the British version, they lay for an hour. The night was so black that not an object could be distinguished at the distance of a yard. The bivouac fires, beat about by the enemy's shot, burned red and dull in the deserted camp.

A straggling fire of musketry in the direction of the pickets gave warning of a closer struggle. It paused a few moments, then a fearful yell, and the whole heavens seemed ablaze with musketry. The British thought themselves surrounded. Two regiments flew to support the pickets; another, forming in close column, stole to the rear of the encampment and remained there as a reserve. After that, all order, all discipline, were lost. Each officer, as he succeeded in collecting twenty or thirty men about him, plunged into the American ranks, and began the fight that Pakenham reported as—«A more extraordinary conflict has perhaps never occurred: absolutely hand to hand, both officers and men."

Jackson had marshaled his men along the line of a plantation canal (the Rodriguez Canal), about two miles from the British. He himself led the attack on their left. Coffee, with the Tennesseans, Hinds's dragoons, and Beale's rifles, skirting along the edge of the swamp, made the assault on their right. The broadside from the Carolina was the signal to start. It was on the right that the fiercest fighting was done. Coffee ordered his men to be sure of their aim, to fire at a short distance, and not to lose a shot. Trained to the rifle from childhood, the Tennesseans could fire faster and more surely than any mere soldier could ever hope to do. Wherever they heard the sharp crack of a British rifle, they advanced; and the British were as eager to meet them. The short rifle of the English service proved also no match for the long-bore of the Western hunters. When they came to close quarters, neither side having bayonets, they clubbed their guns, to the ruin of many a fine weapon. But the canny Tennesseans, rather than risk their rifles, their own property, used for close quarters their long knives and tomahawks, whose skillful handling they had learned from the Indians.

The second division of the British troops, coming up the Bayou, heard the firing, and pressing forward with all speed, arrived in time to reinforce their right; but the superiority in numbers which this gave them was more than offset by the guns of the Carolina, which maintained their fire during the action, and long after it was over.

A heavy fog, as in Homeric times, obscuring the field and the combatants, put an end to the struggle. Jackson withdrew his men to Rodriguez Canal; the British fell back to their camp.

A number of prisoners were made on both sides. Among the Americans taken were a handful of New Orleans's most prominent citizens, who were sent to the fleet at Ship Island. The most distinguished prisoner made by the Americans was Major Mitchell of the Ninety-fifth Rifles; and to his intense chagrin he was forced to yield his sword, not to regulars, but to Coffee's uncourtly Tennesseans. It was this feeling that dictated his answer to Jackson's courteous message requesting that he would make known any requisite for his comfort: "Return my compliments to General Jackson, and say that as my baggage will reach me in a few days I shall be able to dispense with his polite attentions."

The chronicler of the anecdote aptly adds, that had the major persisted in this rash determination, he would never have been in a condition to partake of the hospitalities which were lavished upon him during his detention in New Orleans and Natchez, where the prisoners were sent. On his way to Natchez he became the guest at a plantation famed for its elegance and luxury. At the supper table he met the daughter of the house, a young Creole girl as charming and accomplished as she was beautiful. Speaking French fluently, he was soon engaged in a lively conversation with her. She mentioned with enthusiasm a party of Tennesseans entertained by her father a few days before. Still smarting from his capture, the major could not refrain from saying: «Mademoiselle, I am astonished that one so refined could find pleasure in the society of such rude barbarians.» «Major,» she replied with glowing face, «I had rather be the wife of one of those hardy, coarsely clad men, who have marched two thousand miles to fight for the honor of their country, than wear a coronet.»

To return to the battle-field. The Rodriguez Canal, with its embankment, formed a pretty good line of fortifications in itself. Jackson, without the loss of an hour's time, sent to the city for spades and picks, and set his army to work deepening the canal and strengthening the embankment. For the latter, any material within reach was used: timber, fence rails, bales of cotton (which is the origin of the myth that he fought behind ramparts of cotton bales). His men, most of them handling a spade for the first and last time in their lives, dug as they had fought a few hours before,—every stroke aimed to tell.

General Jackson established his headquarters in the residence of the Macarty plantation, within two hundred yards of his intrenchments.

The British passed a miserable night. Not until the last fire was extinguished, and the fog completely veiled the field, did the Carolina cease her firing and move to the other side of the river. The men, shivering on the damp ground, exposed to the cold moist atmosphere, with now none but their scant half-spoiled rations, were depressed and discouraged; and the officers were more anxious and uncertain than ever, and more completely in error as to the force opposed to them. From the intrepidity and boldness of the Americans, they imagined that at least five thousand had been in the field that night. Other observations strengthened this misapprehension: each volunteer company, with its different uniform, represented to military minds so many different regiments, a tenfold multiplication of the Americans. Besides, in the din of commands, cries, and answers, as much French was heard as English. The truth began to dawn upon the British, that much as the Creoles hated the Americans, they were not going to allow a foreign invader to occupy a land which they considered theirs by right of original discovery, occupation, and development, whatever might be the flag or form of government over them.

The dawning of the twenty-fourth disclosed in the river another vessel, the Louisiana, in position near the Carolina; and all day the camp lay helpless under their united cannonading. A gloomier Christmas-tide, as our genial chronicler Walker puts it, could hardly be imagined for the sons of Merrie England. Had it been in the day of the cable, they would have known that their hardships and bloodshed were over; that at that very date, the twenty-fourth of December, the peace that terminated the war between the two contending countries was being signed in Ghent. The unexpected arrival, however, on Christmas Day, of the new commander-in-chief, Sir Edward Pakenham, accompanied by a distinguished staff, sent through the hearts of the British a thrill of their wonted all-conquering confidence; and the glad cheers of welcome that greeted Sir Edward from his old companions in arms and veterans of the Peninsula rang over into the American camp.

Well might Jackson's men, as they heard it, bend with more dogged determination over their spades and picks. Sir Edward Pakenham was too well known, in a place so heavily populated from Europe as New Orleans was, not to make the thrill of joy in his own army a thrill of apprehension in an opposing one. It is perhaps from this thrill of apprehension at that moment in their breasts that dates the pride of the people of New Orleans in Pakenham, and the affectionate tribute of homage which they always interrupt their account of the glorious eighth to pay to him.

The son of the Earl of Longford, he came from a family which had been ennobled for its military qualities. From his lieutenancy he had won every grade by some perilous service, and generally at the cost of a wound; few officers, even of that hard-fighting day, had encountered so many perils and hardships, and had so many wounds to show for them. He had fought side by side with Wellington (who was his brother-in-law) through the Peninsular War; he headed the storming party at Badajoz, actually the second man to mount one of the ladders; and as brigadier of the Old Fighting Third, under Picton, in the absence by illness of his chief, he led the charge at Salamanca, which gained the victory for England and won him his knighthood. An earldom and the governorship of Louisiana, it is said, had been promised him as the reward of his American expedition,—an expedition which the government had at first seriously contemplated confiding to no less a leader than the Iron Duke himself.

Sir Edward's practiced eye soon took in the difficulties and embarrassments of the British position. His council of war was prolonged far into the night; and among the anxiously waiting subalterns outside, the rumor was whispered that their chief was so dissatisfied after receiving Keane's full report that he had but little hope of success, and that he even thought of withdrawing the army and making a fresh attempt in another quarter. But the sturdy veteran Sir Alexander Cochrane would hear of no such word as fail. «If the army,» he said, «shrinks from the task, I will fetch the sailors and marines from the fleet, and with them storm the American lines and march to the city. The soldiers can then,» he added, «bring up the baggage.»

The result of the council was the decision, first to silence the Carolina and Louisiana, then to carry the American lines by storm. All the large cannon that could be spared were ordered from the fleet; and by the night of the twenty-sixth a powerful battery was planted on the levee. The next morning it opened fire on the vessels, which answered with broadsides; a furious cannonading ensued. Pakenham, standing in full view on the levee, cheered his artillerists. Jackson, from the dormer window of the Macarty mansion, kept his telescope riveted on his boats. The bank of the river above and below the American camp was lined with spectators watching with breathless interest the tempest of cannon-balls, bursting shells, hot shot, and rockets, pouring from levee and gunboats. In half an hour the Carolina was struck, took fire, and blew up. The British gave three loud cheers. The Louisiana strained every nerve to get out of reach of the terrible battery now directed full upon her; but with wind and current against her she seemed destined to the fate of the Carolina, when her officers bethought them of towing, and so moved her slowly up-stream. As she dropped her anchors opposite the American camp, her crew gave three loud cheers in defiant answer to the British. That evening the British army, in two columns, under Keane and Gibbs, moved forward: the former by the levee road, the latter under cover of the woods, to within six hundred yards of the American lines, where they encamped for the night. But there was little sleep or rest for them. The American riflemen, with individual enterprise, bushwhacked them without intercession, driving in their outposts and picking off picket after picket,— a mode of warfare that the English, fresh from Continental etiquette, indignantly branded as barbarous.

Jackson, with his telescope, had seen from the Macarty house the line of Pakenham's action, and set to work to resist it, giving his aides a busy night's work. He strengthened his battery on the levee, added a battery to command the road, reinforced his infantry, and cut the levee so that the rising river would flood the road. The Mississippi proved recreant, however, and fell instead of rising; and the road remained undamaged.

The American force now consisted of four thousand men and twenty pieces of artillery, not counting the always formidable guns of the Louisiana, commanding the situation from her vantage ground of the river. The British columns held eight thousand men.

The morning was clear and frosty; the sun, breaking through the mists, shone with irradiating splendor. The British ranks advanced briskly, in a new elation of spirits after yesterday's success. Keane marched his column as near the levee as possible, and under screen of the buildings of the two plantations, Bienvenu's and Chalmette's, intervening between him and the American line; Gibbs hugged the woods on the right. The Ninety-fifth extended across the field, in skirmishing order, meeting Keane's men on their right. Pakenham, with his staff and a guard composed of the Fourteenth Dragoons, rode in the centre of the line so as to command a view of both columns. Just as Keane's column passed the Bienvenu buildings, the Chalmette buildings were blown up; and then the general saw, through his glasses, the mouths of Jackson's large cannon completely covering his column. And these guns, as our authority states, were manned as guns are not often manned on land. Around one of the twenty-four-pounders stood a band of red-shirted, bewhiskered, desperate-looking men, begrimed with smoke and mud:

they were the Baratarians, who had answered Jackson's orders by running in all the way from their fort on Bayou St. John that morning. The other battery was in charge of the practiced crew of the destroyed Carolina. Preceded by a shower of rockets, and covered by the fire from the artillery in front and their battery on the levee, the British army advanced, solid, cool, steady, beautiful in the rhythm of their step and the glitter of their uniforms and equipments, moving as if on dress parade,—to the Americans a display of the beauty and majesty of power such as they had never seen.

The great guns of the Baratarians and of the crew of the Carolina and those of the Louisiana flashed forth almost simultaneously, and all struck full in the scarlet ranks. The havoc was terrible. For a time Keane held his men firm in a vain display of valor, under the pitiless destructive fire, no shot or bullet missing its aim or falling short. Then the Americans saw the heaving columns change to a thin red streak, which disappeared from view as under the wand of an enchanter, the men dropping into the ditches, burying head and shoulders in the rushes on the banks. Pakenham's face grew dark and gloomy at the sight. Never before, it is said, had a British soldier in his presence quailed before an enemy or sought cover from a fire.

Gibbs had fared no better. He who had led the storming party against Fort Cornelius, who had scaled the parapets of Badajoz and the walls of St. Sebastian, could not but despise the low levee and the narrow ditch of the American fortifications; but after one ineffectual dash at the enemy's lines, his men could be brought to accomplish nothing, remaining inactive in the shelter of the woods until ordered to retire. As the American batteries continued to sweep the field, the British troops could be withdrawn only by breaking into small squads and so escaping to the rear. Sir Thomas Trowbridge, dashing forward with a squad of seamen to the dismounted guns, succeeded with incredible exertion in tying ropes to them and drawing them off.

The British army remained on the Bienvenu plantation. Pakenham and his staff rode back to their headquarters at Villeré's. Another council of war was called. Pakenham's depression was now quite evident, but the stout-hearted Cochrane again stood indomitably firm. He showed that their failure thus far was due to the superiority of the American artillery. They must supply this deficiency by bringing more large guns from the fleet, and equip a battery strong enough to cope with the few old guns of the Americans. It was suggested that the Americans were intrenched. "So must we be," he replied promptly. It was determined therefore to treat the American lines as regular fortifications, by erecting batteries against them and so attempting to silence their guns. Three days were consumed in the herculean labor of bringing the necessary guns from the fleet. While the British were thus employed, Commodore Patterson constructed a battery on the opposite side of the river, equipped it with cannon from the Louisiana, and manned it by an impressment of every nautical-looking character to be found in the sailor boarding-houses of New Orleans, gathering together as motley a corps as ever fought under one flag: natives of all countries except Great Britain, speaking every language except that of their commander.

On the night of the thirty-first, one half of the British army marched silently to within about four hundred yards of Jackson's line, where they stacked their arms and went to work with spades and picks under the superintendence of Sir John Burgoyne. The night was dark; silence was rigidly enforced; officers joined in the work. Before the dawn of New Year 1815, there faced the American lines three solid *demilunes*, at nearly equal distances apart, armed with thirty pieces of heavy ordnance, furnished with ammunition for six hours, and served by picked gunners of the fleet, veterans of Nelson and Collingswood. As soon as their work was completed, the British infantry fell back to the rear and awaited anxiously the beginning of operations, ready to take advantage of the expected breach in the American works. The sailors and artillerists stood with lighted matches behind their redoubts. A heavy fog hung over the field, so that neither army could see twenty yards ahead. In the American camp, a grand parade had been ordered. At an early hour the troops were astir, in holiday cleanliness and neatness. The different bands sounded their bravest strains; the various standards of the regiments and companies fluttered gayly in the breeze. The British had one glance at it, as the fog rolled up, and then their cannon crashed through the scene. For a moment the American camp trembled; and there was confusion, not of panic, but of men rushing to their assigned posts. By the time the British smoke cleared, every man was in his place, and as the British batteries came into view their answer was ready for them. Jackson strode down the line, stopping at each battery, waving his cap as the men cheered him.

During the fierce cannonade the cotton bales in the American breastworks caught fire, and there was a moment of serious peril to that part of the line; but they were dragged out and cast into the trench. The English were no happier in their use of hogsheads of sugar in their redoubts, the cannon-balls perforating them easily and demolishing them.

In an hour and a half the British fire began to slacken; and as the smoke lifted, it was seen that their intrenchments were beaten in, the guns exposed, and the gunners badly thinned. Not long after, their batteries were completely silenced and their parapets leveled with the plain. The British battery on the levee had with their hot shot kept the Louisiana at a distance; but now, the Americans turning their attention to it, that battery was reduced to the same condition as the redoubts.

The English army again retired, baffled; and during the night, such of their guns as had not been destroyed were removed. The soldiers did not conceal their discouragement. For two whole days and nights there had been no rest in camp, except for those that were cool enough to sleep in a shower of cannon-balls. From the general down to the meanest sentinel, all had suffered in the severe strain of fatigue. They saw that they were greatly overmatched in artillery, their provisions were scant and coarse, they had, properly speaking, no rest at night, and sickness was beginning to appear.

Sir Edward had one more plan, one worthy of his bold character. It was to storm the American lines on both sides of the river, beginning with the right bank, which would enable the British to turn the conquered batteries on Jackson's lines, and drive him from his position and cut him off from the city.

By the 7th of January, with another heroic exertion, Villeré's canal was prolonged two miles to the river, and the barges to transport the troops to the other bank carried through. During the delay a reinforcement arrived, two fine regiments: Pakenham's own, the Seventh Fusileers, and the Forty-third under Major-General John Lambert, also one of Wellington's apprentices. Pakenham divided his army, now ten thousand strong, into three brigades, under command respectively of Generals Lambert, Gibbs, and Keane. His plan of attack was simple. Colonel Thornton, with fourteen hundred men, was to cross the river during the night of the seventh, and steal upon and carry the American line before day. At a signal to be given by him, Gibbs was to storm the American left, whilst General Keane should threaten their right; Lambert held the reserve.

Jackson steadied himself for what he understood to be the last round in the encounter. He also had received a reinforcement. A few days before, the long-expected drafted militia of Kentucky, twenty-two hundred men, arrived; but arrived in a condition that made them a questionable addition to his strength. Hurried from their homes without supplies, they had traveled fifteen hundred miles without demur, under the impression that the government would plentifully furnish and equip them in New Orleans. Only about a third were armed, with old muskets, and nearly all of them were in want of clothing. The poor fellows had to hold their tattered garments together to hide their nakedness as they marched through the streets. The government of course did nothing. The citizens, acutely moved, raised a sum of sixteen thousand dollars and expended it for blankets and woolens. The latter were distributed among the ladies; and by them, in a few days, made into comfortable garments for their needy defenders.

The American force now amounted to about four thousand men on the left bank of the river. One division of it, the right, was commanded by General Ross; the other by General Coffee, whose line extended so far in the swamp that his men stood in the water during the day, and at night slept on floating logs made fast to trees,—every man "half a horse and half an alligator," as the song says. The artillery and the fortifications had been carefully strengthened and repaired. Another line of defense had been prepared a mile and a half in the rear, where were stationed all who were not well armed or were regarded as not able-bodied. A third line, for another stand in case of defeat, still nearer the city, was being vigorously worked upon.

Owing to the caving of the banks of the canal, Thornton could get only enough boats launched in the river to carry seven hundred of his men across; these the current of the Mississippi bore a mile and a half below the landing-place selected, and it was daylight before they reached there.

Gibbs and Keane marched their divisions to within sight of the dark line of the American breastworks, and waited impatiently for the signal of Thornton's guns Not a sound could be heard from him. In fact, he had not yet landed his men. Although sensible that concert of action with the troops on the right bank had failed, and that his movement was hopelessly crippled, Pakenham, obstinate, gallant, and reckless, would nevertheless not rescind his first orders. When the morning mists lifted, his columns were in motion across the field.

Gibbs was leading his division coolly and steadily through the grape-shot pouring upon it, when it began to be whispered among the men that the Forty-fourth, who were detailed for the duty, had not brought the ladders and fascines. Pakenham, riding to the front and finding it was true, ordered Colonel Mullen and the delinquent regiment back for them. In the confusion and delay, with his brave men falling all around him, the indignant Gibbs exclaimed furiously: "Let me live until to-morrow, and I'll hang him to the highest tree in that swamp!" Rather than stand exposed to the terrible fire, he ordered his men forward. "On they went," says Walker (who got his description from eye-witnesses), "in solid, compact order, the men hurrahing and the rocketers covering their front with a blaze of combustibles. The American batteries played upon them with awful effect, cutting great lanes through the column from front to rear, opening huge gaps in their flanks. . . . Still the column advanced without pause or recoil, steadily; then all the batteries in the American line, including Patterson's marine battery on the right bank, joined in hurling a tornado of iron missiles into that serried scarlet column, which shook and oscillated as if tossed on an angry sea. 'Stand to your guns!' cried Jackson; 'don't waste your ammunition, see that every shot tells;' and again, 'Give it to them, boys! Let us finish the business to-day.'"

On the summit of the parapet stood the corps of Tennessee sharpshooters, with their rifles sighted; and behind them, two lines of Kentuckians to take their places as soon as they had fired. The redcoats were now within two hundred yards of the ditch. "Fire! Fire!" Carroll's order rang through the lines. It was obeyed, not hurriedly, not excitedly, not confusedly, but calmly and deliberately, the men calculating the range of their guns. Not a shot was thrown away. Nor was it one or several discharges, followed by pauses and interruptions: it was continuous; the men firing, falling back, and advancing, with mechanical precision. The British column began to melt away under it like snow before a torrent; but Gibbs still led it on, and the gallant Peninsula officers, throwing themselves in front, incited and aroused their men by every appeal and by the most brilliant examples of courage. "Where are the Forty-fourth," called the men, "with the fascines and ladders? When we get to the ditch we cannot scale the lines!" "Here come the Forty-fourth!" shouted Gibbs; "here come the Forty-fourth!" There came at least a detachment of the Forty-fourth, with Pakenham himself at the head, rallying and inspiring them, invoking their heroism in the past, reminding them of their glory in Egypt and elsewhere, calling them his countrymen, leading them forward, until they breasted the storm of bullets with the rest of the column. At this moment Pakenham's arm was struck by one ball, his horse killed by another. He mounted the small black Creole pony of his aide, and pressed forward. But the column had now reached the physical limit of daring. Most of the officers were cut down; there were not enough left to command. The column broke. Some rushed forward to the ditch; the rest fell back to the swamp. There they rallied, re-formed, and throwing off their knapsacks advanced again, and again were beaten back; their colonel scaling the breastworks and falling dead inside the lines.

Keane, judging the moment had come for him to act, now wheeled his line into column and pushed forward with the Ninety-third in front. The gallant, stalwart Highlanders, with their heavy, solid, massive front of a hundred men, their muskets glittering in the morning sun, their tartans waving in the air, strode across the field and into the hell of bullets and cannon-balls. "Hurrah! brave Highlanders!" Pakenham cried to them, waving his cap in his left hand. Fired by their intrepidity, the remnant of Gibbs's brigade once more came up to the charge, with Pakenham on the left and Gibbs on the right.

A shot from one of the American big guns crashed into them, killing and wounding all around. Pakenham's horse fell; he rolled into the arms of an officer who sprang forward to receive him; a grape-shot had passed through his thigh; another ball struck him in the groin. He was borne to the rear, and in a few moments breathed his last under an oak The bent and twisted venerable old tree still stands; Pakenham's oak, it is called.

Gibbs, desperately wounded, lingered in agony until the next day. Keane was carried bleeding off the field. There were no field officers now left to command or rally. Major Wilkinson, however,—we like to remember his name,—shouting to his men to follow, passed the ditch, climbed up the breastworks, and was raising his head and shoulders over the parapet, when a dozen guns pointed against him riddled him with bullets. His mutilated body was carried through the American lines, followed by murmurs of sympathy and regret from the Tennesseans and Kentuckians. "Bear up, my dear fellow, you are too brave to die," bade a kind-hearted Kentucky major. "I thank you from my heart," faintly murmured the young officer; "it is all over with me. You can render me a favor. It is to communicate to my commander that I fell on your parapet, and died like a soldier and true Englishman."

The British troops at last broke, disorganized; each regiment leaving two-thirds dead or wounded on the field. The Ninety-third, which had gone into the charge nine hundred men strong, mustered after the retreat one hundred and thirty-nine. The fight had lasted twenty-five minutes.

Hearing of the death of Pakenham and the wounding of Gibbs and Keane, General Lambert advanced with the reserve. Just before he received his last wound, Pakenham had ordered one of his staff to call up the reserve; but as the bugler was about to sound the advance, his arm was struck with a ball and his bugle fell to the ground. The order, therefore, was never given; and the reserve marched up only to cover the retreat of the two other brigades.

At eight o'clock the firing ceased from the American lines; and Jackson, with his staff, slowly walked along his fortifications, stopping at each command to make a short address. As he passed, the bands struck up 'Hail Columbia'; and the line of men, turning to face him, burst into loud hurrahs.

But the cries of exultation died away into exclamations of pity and horror as the smoke ascended from the field. A thin, fine red line in the distance, discovered by glasses, indicated the position of General Lambert and the reserve. Upon the field, save the crawling, agonizing wounded, not a living foe was to be seen. From the American ditch, one could have walked a quarter of a mile on the killed and disabled. The course of the column could be distinctly traced by the broad red line of uniforms upon the ground. They fell in their tracks, in some places whole platoons together. Dressed in their gay uniforms, cleanly shaved and attired for the promised victory, there was not, as Walker says, a private among the slain whose aspect did not present more of the pomp and circumstance of war than any of the commanders of their victors.

About noon, a British officer, with a trumpeter and a soldier bearing a white flag, approached the camp, bearing a written proposition for an armistice to bury the dead. It was signed «Lambert.» General Jackson returned it, with a message that the signer of the letter had forgotten to designate his authority and rank, which was necessary before any negotiations could be entered into. The flag of truce retired to the British lines, and soon returned with the full signature, «John Lambert, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces.»

On the right bank of the river it was the British who were victorious. The Americans, yielding to panic, fled disgracefully, as people with shame relate to this day. It was on this side of the river that the British acquired the small flag which hangs among the trophies of the Peninsular War, in Whitehall, with the inscription: «Taken at the battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815.» . . .

As soon as the armistice expired, the American batteries resumed their firing. Colonel Thornton with his men recrossed the river during the night of the eighth. From the ninth to the eighteenth a small squadron of the British fleet made an ineffectual attempt to pass Fort St. Philip. Had it timed its action better with Pakenham's, his defeat might at least have cost his enemies dearer.

On the 18th of January took place the exchange of prisoners, and New Orleans received again her sorely missed citizens. Although their detention from the stirring scenes of the camp formed in their lives one of the unforgivable offenses of destiny, their courteous, kindly, pleasant treatment by the British naval officers was one of the reminiscences which gilded the memories of the period.

Sir John Lambert's retreat was the ablest measure of the British campaign. To retire in boats was impracticable; there were not boats enough, and it was not safe to divide the army. A road was therefore opened, along the bank of the bayou, across the prairie to the lake: a severe and difficult task, that occupied nine days. All the wounded except those who could not be removed, the field artillery and stores, were placed in barges and conveyed to the fleet; the ship guns were spiked; and on the night of the eighteenth the army was stealthily and quietly formed into column. The camp-fires were lighted as usual, the sentinels posted, each one provided with a stuffed dummy to put in his stead when the time came for him to join the march in the rear of the column. They marched all night, reaching the shores of Lake Borgne at break of day.

Early in the morning of the nineteenth, rumors of the retreat of the English began to circulate in the American camp. Officers and men collected in groups on the parapet to survey the British camp. It presented pretty much the same appearance as usual, with its huts, flags, and sentinels. General Jackson, looking through his telescope from Macarty's window, could not convince himself that the enemy had gone. At last General Humbert, one of Napoleon's veterans, was called upon for his opinion. He took a look through the telescope, and immediately exclaimed, «They are gone!» When asked the reason for his belief, he pointed to a crow flying very near one of the sentinels.

While a reconnoitring party was being formed, a flag of truce approached. It brought a courteous letter from General Lambert, announcing the departure of the British army, and soliciting the kind attentions of General Jackson to the sick and wounded, whom he was compelled to leave behind. The circumstances of these wounded men being made known in the city, a number of ladies drove immediately down the coast in their carriages with articles for their comfort.

The British fleet left the Gulf shores on the 17th of March. When it reached England, it received the news that Napoleon had escaped and that Europe was up again in arms. Most of the troops were at once re-embarked for Belgium, to join Wellington's army. General Lambert, knighted for gallantry at New Orleans, distinguished himself at Waterloo.

A handsome tablet in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, commemorates Pakenham's gallant life and heroic death.

Walker relates that the Duke of Wellington, after the battle of New Orleans, always cherished a great admiration for General Jackson, and when introduced to American visitors never failed to inquire after his health.

ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE

(1809–1891)

KINGLAKE the historian did not turn literary man of set purpose. After a trip in the Orient he jotted down his reminiscences; talking, as he himself says, to a certain friend, rather than writing for the public. The resulting book, ‹Eothen,› was a brilliant success: the author became famous at a bound. In after years his solid literary performance as historian of the Crimean war confirmed the position so easily won.

Alexander William Kinglake was the eldest son of a banker of Taunton, England, where Alexander was born August 5th, 1809. He was reared in a home of refinement, and as a lad was a notable horseman and had a taste for Homer. He went to Eton in due course, and thence in 1828 to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was the friend of Thackeray and Tennyson. He got his B. A. in 1832, entered Lincoln's Inn, and was called to the bar in 1837. But before beginning his legal career he took the Eastern tour, from which he made literary capital by writing ‹Eothen.› The book, which did not appear till 1844, is one of the most enjoyable chronicles of travel in English; full of picturesque description, quiet humor, and suggestive thought,—the whole seeming freshly, spontaneously thrown off, though in reality the work was several times rewritten. ‹Eothen› is as far as possible removed from the conventional account of tourist doings. It gives in a charming way the personal and independent impressions of an Englishman of brains, culture, and literary gift. The style is at once easy and elegant. The success of the volume, coming in a day when travel-books were not so numerous as they now are, is not hard to understand.

A. W. KINGLAKE

Kinglake practiced law with only a desultory attention. The success of ‹Eothen› made him think of further literary work; and a natural disposition towards travel and an interest in affairs military drew him in the direction of his master work, the Crimean history. In 1845 he went to Algiers, and accompanied the French general St. Arnaud on his expedition in Algeria. In 1854 he joined the campaign in the Crimea, was present at a battle, and remained with the English army until the opening of the siege. This practical experience paved the way for his acceptance of Lady Raglan's proposal that he should write the history of the campaign, which her husband Lord Raglan conducted. He agreed to do so, and all papers were turned over to his care. Kinglake displayed the most painstaking care and diligence in working up his material, and was also conscientious in polishing his writing. The result is a work that is an authority in its field and an attractive piece of literature. There can be but one opinion with regard to the honesty, care of workmanship, and literary brilliancy which it shows. The historian at times enters too minutely into details, and he is frankly prejudiced; his disapproval of Napoleon III. coloring his view, while his belief in his friend Lord Raglan gives his account something of party bias. But with Kinglake the judgment is always based on moral principle. And he possessed some of the finest qualities of the history-writer. He could make historic scenes vivid and vital; he had sympathy, imagination, knowledge of his subject. His marshaling of events has coherence and unity. The human interest is strong in his pages. In fine, he is among the most readable of modern writers of history.

Kinglake served in Parliament as a Liberal from Bridgewater from 1857 to 1868: his influence was felt in worthy reforms. The preparation of his eight-volume history occupied him for thirty-four years, and it will remain his monument. ‹The Invasion of the Crimea, its Origin, and an Account of its Progress down to the Death of Lord Raglan,› the first volume of which appeared in 1863 and the last in 1888, represents the life work of a writer of force and originality. Kinglake was a man of charming personality. His final illness, a cancer of the tongue, was borne with great courage; his death occurring on January 2d, 1891. His dislike of the parading of one's private life is shown in his instructions to his literary executor that none of the manuscripts he left should be published.

THE DESERT

From ‹Eothen›

As long as you are journeying in the interior of the desert, you have no particular point to make for as your resting-place. The endless sands yield nothing but small stunted shrubs: even these fail after the first two or three days; and from that time you pass over broad plains — you pass over newly reared hills — you pass through valleys that the storm of the last week has dug, and the hills and the valleys are sand, sand, sand, still sand, and only sand, and sand, and sand again. The earth is so samely that your eyes turn towards heaven — towards heaven, I mean, in the sense of sky. You look to the Sun, for he is your taskmaster, and by him you know the measure of the work that you have done and the measure of the work that remains for you to do; he comes when you strike your tent in the early morning, and then for the first hour of the day, as you move forward on your camel, he stands at your near side, and makes you know that the whole day's toil is before you;—then for a while and a long while you see him no more, for you are veiled and shrouded, and dare not look upon the greatness of his glory; but you know where he strides overhead, by the touch of his flaming sword. No words are spoken; but your Arabs moan, your camels sigh, your skin glows, your shoulders ache, and for sights you see the pattern and the web of the silk that veils your eyes, and the glare of the outer light. Time labors on: your skin glows, and your shoulders ache, your Arabs moan, your camels sigh, and you see the same pattern in the silk and the same glare of light beyond; but conquering Time marches on, and by-and-by the descending Sun has compassed the heaven, and now softly touches your right arm, and throws your lank shadow over the sand, right along on the way for Persia: then again you look upon his face, for his power is all veiled in his beauty, and the redness of flames has become the redness of roses; the fair, wavy cloud that fled in the morning now comes to his sight once more — comes blushing, yet still comes on — comes burning with blushes, yet hastens, and clings to his side.

Then arrives your time for resting. The world about you is all your own; and there where you will, you pitch your solitary tent: there is no living thing to dispute your choice. When at last the spot had been fixed upon, and we came to a halt, one of the Arabs would touch the chest of my camel, and utter at the same time a peculiar gurgling sound: the beast instantly understood, and obeyed the sign, and slowly sunk under me till she brought her body to a level with the ground; then gladly enough I alighted; the rest of the camels were unloaded, and turned loose to browse upon the shrubs of the desert, where shrubs there were, or where these failed, to wait for the small quantity of food which was allowed them out of our stores. . . .

At the beginning of my journey, the night breeze blew coldly; when that happened, the dry sand was heaped up outside round the skirts of the tent, and so the wind that everywhere else could sweep as he listed along those dreary plains was forced to turn aside in his course, and make way, as he ought, for the Englishman. Then within my tent there were heaps of luxuries,—dining-rooms, dressing-rooms, libraries, bedrooms, drawing-rooms, oratories,—all crowded into the space of a hearth-rug. The first night, I remember, with my books and maps about me, I wanted light; they brought me a taper, and immediately from out of the silent desert there rushed in a flood of life, unseen before. Monsters of moths of all shapes and hues, that never before perhaps had looked upon the shining of a flame, now madly thronged into my tent, and dashed through the fire of the candle till they fairly extinguished it with their burning limbs. Those who had failed in attaining this martyrdom suddenly became serious, and clung despondingly to the canvas.

By-and-by there was brought to me the fragrant tea, and big masses of scorched and scorching toast, that minded me of old Eton days, and the butter that had come all the way to me in this desert of Asia, from out of that poor, dear, starving Ireland. I feasted like a king,—like four kings,—like a boy in the fourth form.

When the cold, sullen morning dawned, and my people began to load the camels, I always felt loath to give back to the waste this little spot of ground that had glowed for a while with the cheerfulness of a human dwelling. One by one the cloaks, the saddles, the baggage, the hundred things that strewed the ground and made it look so familiar—all these were taken away and laid upon the camels. A speck in the broad tracts of Asia remained still impressed with the mark of patent portmanteaus and the heels of London boots; the embers of the fire lay black and cold upon the sand, and these were the signs we left.

My tent was spared to the last; but when all else was ready for the start, then came its fall: the pegs were drawn, the canvas shivered, and in less than a minute there was nothing that remained of my genial home but only a pole and a bundle. The encroaching Englishman was off; and instant, upon the fall of the canvas, like an owner who had waited and watched, the Genius of the Desert stalked in. . . .

I can understand the sort of amazement of the Orientals at the scantiness of the retinue with which an Englishman passes the desert; for I was somewhat struck myself when I saw one of my countrymen making his way across the wilderness in this simple style. At first there was a mere moving speck in the horizon; my party, of course, became all alive with excitement, and there were many surmises: soon it appeared that three laden camels were approaching, and that two of them carried riders; in a little while we saw that one of the riders wore the European dress, and at last the travelers were pronounced to be an English gentleman and his servant; by their side there were a couple, I think, of Arabs on foot: and this was the whole party.

You,—you love sailing: in returning from a cruise to the English coast, you see often enough a fisherman's humble boat far away from all shores, with an ugly black sky above and an angry sea beneath; you watch the grisly old man at the helm, carrying his craft with strange skill through the turmoil of waters, and the boy, supple-limbed, yet weather-worn already, and with steady eyes that look through the blast,—you see him understanding commandments from the jerk of his father's white eyebrow, now belaying and now letting go, now scrunching himself down into mere ballast, or bailing out Death with a pipkin. Stale enough is the sight; and yet when I see it I always stare anew, and with a kind of Titanic exultation, because that a poor boat, with the brain of a man and the hands of a boy on board, can match herself so bravely against black Heaven and Ocean: well, so when you have traveled for days and days, over an Eastern desert, without meeting the likeness of a human being, and then at last see an English shooting-jacket and his servant come listlessly slouching along from out the forward horizon, you stare at the wide unproportion between this slender company and the boundless plains of sand through which they are keeping their way.

This Englishman, as I afterwards found, was a military man returning to his country from India, and crossing the desert at this part in order to go through Palestine. As for me, I had come pretty straight from England; and so here we met in the wilderness at about half-way from our respective starting-points. As we approached each other, it became with me a question whether we should speak. I thought it likely that the stranger would accost me; and in the event of his doing so, I was quite ready to be as sociable and as chatty as I could be, according to my nature, but still I could not think of anything in particular that I had to say to him. Of course among civilized people the not having anything to say is no excuse at all for not speaking, but I was shy and indolent; and I felt no great wish to stop and talk like a morning visitor, in the midst of those broad solitudes. The traveler perhaps felt as I did; for except that we lifted our hands to our caps and waved our arms in courtesy, we passed each other as if we had passed in Bond Street. Our attendants, however, were not to be cheated of the delight that they felt in speaking to new listeners and hearing fresh voices once more. The masters, therefore, had no sooner passed each other than their respective servants quietly stopped and entered into conversation. As soon as my camel found that her companions were not following her, she caught the social feeling and refused to go on. I felt the absurdity of the situation, and determined to accost the stranger, if only to avoid the awkwardness of remaining stuck fast in the desert whilst our servants were amusing themselves. When with this intent I turned round my camel, I found that the gallant officer, who had passed me by about thirty or forty yards, was exactly in the same predicament as myself. I put my now willing camel in motion and rode up towards the stranger; who, seeing this, followed my example and came forward to meet me. He was the first to speak. He was much too courteous to address me as if he admitted of the possibility of my wishing to accost him from any feeling of mere sociability or civilian-like love of vain talk; on the contrary, he at once attributed my advances to a laudable wish of acquiring statistical information: and accordingly, when we got within speaking distance, he said, "I daresay you wish to know how the Plague is going on at Cairo?" And then he went on to say he regretted that his information did not enable him to give me in numbers a perfectly accurate statement of the daily deaths. He afterwards talked pleasantly enough upon other and less ghastly subjects. I thought him manly and intelligent; a worthy one of the few thousand strong Englishmen to whom the Empire of India is committed.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

From 'The Invasion of the Crimea'

At first, as was natural, the enemy's gunners and riflemen were so far taken by surprise as to be hardly in readiness to seize the opportunity which Lord Cardigan was presenting to them; and indeed for some time the very extravagance of the operation masked its character from the intelligence of the enemy, preventing him from seeing at once that it must result from some stupendous mistake. But the Russians at length perceived that the distance between our Heavy Brigade and Lord Cardigan's squadrons was every moment increasing, and that, whatever might be the true meaning of the enterprise in which our Light Cavalry had engaged, the red squadrons were not under orders to give it that kind of support which the Englishman calls "thorough-going." This once understood, the enemy had fair means of inferring that the phenomenon of ten beautiful squadrons moving down the North Valley in well-ordered lines, was not the commencement of anything like a general advance on the part of the Allies, and might prove after all to be hardly the result of design. Accordingly, with more or less readiness, the forces on the Causeway Heights, the forces on the Fedioukine Hills, and the twelve-gun battery which crossed the lower end of the valley, became all prepared to inflict upon our Light Cavalry the consequences of the fault which propelled it. It is true that the main body of the Russian cavalry, drawn up in rear of the confronting battery, had been cowed by the result of its encounter with Scarlett's dragoons; but when that has been acknowledged as a qualification of what is coming, it may be said that the three sides of the quadrangle in which our cavalry moved were not only lined with Russians, but with Russians standing firm to their duty.

Soon the fated advance of the Light Brigade had proceeded so far as to begin to disclose its strange purpose: the purpose of making straight for the far distant battery which crossed the foot of the valley, by passing for a mile between two Russian forces; and this at such ugly distance from each as to allow of our squadrons going down under a doubly flanking fire of round shot, grape, and rifle-balls, without the opportunity of yet doing any manner of harm to their assailants. Then from the slopes of the Causeway Heights on the one side and the Fedioukine Hills on the other, the Russian artillery brought its power to bear right and left, with an efficiency every moment increasing; and large numbers of riflemen on the slopes of the Causeway Heights, who had been placed where they were in order to cover the retreat of the Russian battalions, found means to take their part in the work of destroying our horsemen. Whilst Lord Cardigan and his squadrons rode thus under heavy cross-fire, the visible object they had straight before them was the white bank of smoke, from time to time pierced by issues of flame, which marks the site of a battery in action: for in truth the very goal that had been chosen for our devoted squadrons — a goal rarely before assigned to cavalry — was the front of a battery; the front of that twelve-gun battery, with the main body of the Russian cavalry in rear of it, which crossed the lower end of the valley: and so faithful, so resolute, was Lord Cardigan in executing this part of what he understood to be his appointed task, that he chose out one of the guns which he judged to be about the centre of the battery, rode straight at its fire, and made this from first to last his sole guiding star. . . .

Pressing always deeper and deeper into this pen of fire, the devoted brigade, with Lord Cardigan still at its head, continued to move down the valley. The fire the brigade was incurring had not yet come to be of that crushing sort which mows down half a troop in one instant, and for some time a steady pace was maintained. As often as a horse was killed or disabled or deprived of the rider, his fall or his plunge or his ungoverned pressure had commonly the effect of enforcing upon the neighboring chargers more or less of lateral movement, and in this way there was occasioned a slight distension of the rank in which the casualty had occurred; but in the next instant, when the troopers had ridden clear of the disturbing cause, they closed up, and rode on in a line as even as before, though reduced by the loss just sustained. The movement occasioned by each casualty was so constantly recurring, and so constantly followed by the same process,— the process of re-closing the ranks,— that to distant observers the alternate distension and contraction of the line seemed to have the precision and sameness which belong to mechanic contrivance. Of these distant observers there was one — and that too a soldier — who so felt to the heart the true import of what he saw, that in a paroxysm of admiration and grief he burst into tears. In well-maintained order, but growing less every instant, our squadrons still moved down the valley.

Their pace for some time was firmly governed. When horsemen, too valorous to be thinking of flight, are brought into straits of this kind, their tendency is to be galloping swiftly forward, each man at the greatest pace he can exact from his own charger, thus destroying of course the formation of the line: but Lord Cardigan's love of strict uniform order was a propensity having all the force of a passion; and as long as it seemed possible to exert authority by voice or by gesture, the leader of this singular onset was firm in repressing the fault.

Thus when Captain White, of the 17th Lancers (who commanded the squadron of direction), became «anxious,» as he frankly expressed it, «to get out of such a murderous fire, and into the guns,» as being «the best of the two evils,» and, endeavoring with that view to «force the pace,» pressed forward so much as to be almost alongside of the chief's bridle-arm, Lord Cardigan checked this impatience by laying his sword across the captain's breast, telling him at the same time not to try to force the pace, and not to be riding before the leader of the brigade. Otherwise than for this, Lord Cardigan, from the first to the last of the onset, did not speak nor make sign. Riding straight and erect, he never once turned in his saddle with the object of getting a glance at the state of the squadrons which followed him; and to this rigid abstinence — giving proof as such abstinence did of an unbending resolve — it was apparently owing that the brigade never fell into doubt concerning its true path of duty, never wavered (as the best squadrons will, if the leader, for even an instant, appears to be uncertain of purpose), and was guiltless of even inclining to any default except that of failing to keep down the pace.

So far as concerned the first line, this task was now becoming more and more difficult. When the 13th Light Dragoons and the 17th Lancers had passed so far down the valley as to be under effective fire from the guns in their front, as well as from the flanks right and left, their lines were so torn, so cruelly reduced in numbers, as to be hardly any longer capable of retaining the corporate life or entity of the regiment, the squadron, the troop; and these aggregates began to resolve themselves into their component elements — that is, into brave, eager horsemen, growing fiercely impatient of a trial which had thus long denied them their vengeance, and longing to close with all speed upon the guns which had shattered their ranks. The troopers here and there could no longer be restrained from darting forward in front of the officers; and the moment this license obtained, the ceremonious advance of the line was soon changed to an ungoverned onset. The racing spirit broke out; some striving to outride their comrades, some determining not to be passed.

In the course of the advance, Lieutenant Maxse, Lord Cardigan's second aide-de-camp, was wounded; and when the line had come down to within about a hundred yards of the guns, Sir George Wombwell, the extra aide-de-camp, had his horse killed under him. We shall afterwards see that this last casualty did not end the part which Wombwell was destined to take in the battle; but for the moment of course it disabled him, and there was no longer any staff officer in the immediate personal following of the general who led the brigade.

But although he rode singly, and although as we have seen he rigidly abstained from any retrograde glance, Lord Cardigan of course might infer from the tramp of the regiments close following, and from what (without turning in his saddle) he could easily see of their flanks, that the momentum now gathered and gathering was too strong to be moderated by a commander; and rightly perhaps avoiding the effort to govern it by voice or by gesture, he either became impatient himself, and drew the troops on more and more by first increasing his own speed, or else yielded (under necessity) to the impatience of the now shattered squadrons, and closely adjusted his pace to the flow of the torrent behind him. In one way or in the other, a right distance was always maintained between the leader and his first line. As before when advancing at a trot, so now whilst flinging themselves impetuously deep into the jaws of an army, these two regiments of the first line still had in their front the same rigid hussar for their guide, still kept their eyes fastened on the crimson-red overalls and the white near hind-leg of the chestnut which showed them the straight, honest way — the way down to the mouths of the guns. . . .

Lord Cardigan and his first line had come down to within about eighty yards of the mouths of the guns, when the battery delivered a fire from so many of its pieces at once as to constitute almost a salvo. Numbers and numbers of saddles were emptied: and along its whole length the line of the 13th Light Dragoons and 17th Lancers was subjected to the rending perturbance that must needs be created in a body of cavalry by every man who falls slain or wounded; by the sinking and the plunging of every horse that is killed or disabled; and again by the wild, piteous intrusion of the riderless charger, appalled by his sudden freedom coming thus in the midst of a battle, and knowing not whither to rush unless he can rejoin his old troop and wedge himself into its ranks. It is believed by Lord Cardigan that this was the time when, in the 13th Light Dragoons, Captain Oldham, the commander of the regiment, and Captain Goad and Cornet Montgomery, and in the 17th Lancers, Captain Winter and Lieutenant Thompson, were killed; when Captain Robert White and Captain Webb and Lieutenant Sir William Gordon were struck down. The survivors of the first line who remained undisabled were feeble by this time, in numbers scarce more than some fifty or sixty; and the object they rode at was a line of twelve guns close supported by the main body of the Russian cavalry, whilst on their right flank as well as on their left there stood a whole mile's length of hostile array, comprising horse, foot, and artillery. But by virtue of innate warlike passion — the gift, it would seem, of high Heaven to chosen races of men — the mere half of a hundred, carried straight by a resolute leader, were borne on against the strength of the thousands. The few in their pride claimed dominion. Rushing clear of the havoc just wrought, and with Cardigan still untouched at their head, they drove thundering into the smoke which enfolded both the front of the battery and the masses of horsemen behind it. . . .

Lord Cardigan and his first line, still descending at speed on their goal, had rived their way dimly through the outer folds of the cloud which lay piled up in front of the battery; but then there came the swift moment when, through what remained of the dimness, men at last saw the brass cannons gleaming with their muzzles toward the chests of our horses; and visibly the Russian artillerymen — unappalled by the tramp and the aspect of squadrons driving down through the smoke — were as yet standing fast to their guns.

By the material obstacle which they offer to the onset of horsemen, field-pieces in action, with their attendant limber-carriages and tumbrils behind them, add so sure a cause of frustration to the peril that there is in riding at the mouths of the guns, that upon the whole the expedient of attacking a battery in front has been forbidden to cavalry leaders by a recognized maxim of war. But the huge misconception of orders which had sent the brigade down this valley was yet to be fulfilled to its utmost conclusion; and the condition of things had now come to be such that whatever might be the madness (in general) of charging a battery in front, there by this time was no choice of measures. By far the greater part of the harm which the guns could inflict had already been suffered; and I believe that the idea of stopping short on the verge of the battery did not even present itself for a moment to the mind of the leader.

Lord Cardigan moved down at a pace which he has estimated at seventeen miles an hour, and already he had come to within some two or three horses'-lengths of the mouth of one of the guns,—a gun believed to have been a twelve-pounder; but then the piece was discharged, and its torrent of flame seemed to gush in the direction of his chestnut's off fore-arm. The horse was so governed by the impetus he had gathered, and by the hand and the heel of his rider, as to be able to shy only a little at the blaze and the roar of the gun; but Lord Cardigan being presently enwrapped in the new column of smoke now all at once piled up around him, some imagined him slain. He had not been struck. In the next moment, and being still some two horses'-lengths in advance of his squadrons, he attained to the long-sought battery, and shot in between two of its guns.

There was a portion of the 17th Lancers on our extreme left which outflanked the line of the guns, but with this exception the whole of Lord Cardigan's first line descended on the front of the battery: and as their leader had just done before them, so now our horsemen drove in between the guns; and some then at the instant tore on to assail the gray squadrons drawn up in rear of the tumbrils. Others stopped to fight in the battery, and sought to make prize of the guns. After a long and disastrous advance against clouds and invisible foes, they grasped, as it were, at reality. What before had been engines of havoc dimly seen, or only inferred from the jets of their fire and their smoke, were now burnished pieces of cannon with the brightness and the hue of red gold,—cannon still in battery, still hot with the slaughter of their comrades.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

(1819–1875)

In the autumn of 1849, in the midst of the famous Chartist movement in England, there appeared a book, a romance, which excited the enthusiasm of all "Young England" and kindled afresh the spirit of revolt against class oppression. It was called 'Alton Locke'; and was the story of a young London tailor, who, filled with yearnings, poetical and political, which his situation rendered hopeless, joined the Chartists, shared their failure, and in despair quitted England for the New World, only to die on reaching the promised land.

Charles Kingsley

All his misery and failure are ascribed to the brutal indifference of the rich and well-taught to the needs and aspirations of the workingman. When it became known that the author, Charles Kingsley, was a clergyman of the established church, a man of ancient family; that he had been forbidden by the Bishop of London to preach in that city on account of a sermon embodying radical sentiments; and that he was suffering social ostracism and newspaper attack for the stand he had taken, party enthusiasm burned still higher. He became the knight-errant, the chosen hero, of the movement known as "Christian Socialism."

Charles Kingsley was born in Dartmoor, Devon, England, the 13th of June, 1819. He took honors at Cambridge, was ordained, and in 1841 became in turn curate and rector of the church at Eversley, Hampshire, where he lived and died; varying his duty only when in residence as canon at Chester and Westminster, or at Cambridge where he was a professor of modern history in 1861–9. With the exception of two short holidays in the West Indies and America, and two trips on the Continent, his external life saw few changes. But the peace was outward only.

As long as there was evil in the world he stood up to fight it; head downwards he charged at every red rag of doctrine, either in defense or offense. He attacked political economy, competition, the laws of gravitation, the Manchester school, the cholera, Bishop Colenso, and Cardinal Newman. On the other hand, he pleaded the cause of the undefended, from the oppression of Indian widows or the preservation of village greens to the struggles of the Australian canned-meat industry, the success of which, he maintained, would settle the food question forever.

The key to Kingsley's mental development must be sought in his emotional history. His youth was passed in a Devon parish, of which his father, an old-fashioned parson and keen sportsman, was rector. The boy rode to hounds as soon as he could sit a horse, and was a devoted naturalist before he was old enough to know the scientific name of a single specimen of his collection. His love of nature, so rare a quality in children, «had the intensity,» said Mr. Stephen, «and the absorbing power of a sensual appetite. He gave himself up to the pure emotion as a luxuriant nature abandons itself to physical gratification.»

On reaching manhood, the strength of his sympathies and the vigor of his perceptions threw him headlong into the revolt of the time against oppression and wrong. But Kingsley was as far as Disraeli from being a democrat, and as sincere in defending a social and religious hierarchy. His politics were in fact those of the great statesman's Coningsby,—a «Young England» Tory who denounces social wrongs and provides the workingman with good clothes, good food, and amusements, but will listen to no revolutionary remedy to destroy the evil.

His fighting propensity left a mark on the time and its literature. It formulated the creed that pluck and Bible texts would regenerate the world; and it created the «muscular Christian» who strutted through the pages of most of the novels of the day, from Bulwer with his ‹Kenelm Chillingly› to the waxwork Sir Galahads of the Misses Wetherell. Kingsley disliked the cult, and denied that he was responsible for it; but it became to him a sort of Frankenstein's monster, growing till it assumed the proportions of strength-worship and the elevation of physical over moral force.

A passionate Protestant, he was deeply affected by the agitation in the English Church known as the «Oxford Movement,» and the spirit of what was called «Manichæism,» or the principle which placed the monkish over the domestic virtues. He had a theory that the love of woman is the guide of the intellect, and that the love of nature teaches the theory of the universe. Elizabeth in the ‹Saint's Tragedy,› the heroines in ‹Westward Ho!› Hypatia, Grace in ‹Two Years Ago,› are the saving influences of the men of these books. Lancelot in ‹Yeast› designs a great allegorical drawing, which sets forth the influence of the feminine charm on every variety of human being. «The picture,» says a reviewer in Cornhill, «could hardly be put on canvas; but it would be a perfect frontispiece to Kingsley's works.»

The stories ‘Yeast’ and ‘Alton Locke,’ written on the same theme and in the same year, are both clumsily constructed and uneven; and fifty years later, lack the interest they excited when their topics were new and immediate. Kingsley has the tendency to preach, common to all novelists with a purpose. The power of these books is in their intense feeling and sincerity, and the genuine force of their attack upon injustice. And there are scenes in ‘Yeast,’ such as the village feast, and the death of old Harry Verney the gamekeeper; and in ‘Alton Locke,’ such as the Chartist rising in the country, — as bold as anything in English fiction. ‘Alton Locke’ is the more sustained effort, the more ambitious conception; but Carlyle describes it as a «vivid creation, still left half chaotic.» But of Kingsley's masterpiece in the way of character, the old Scotchman Mackaye, he says, «My invaluable countryman in this book is nearly perfect.»

Kingsley's historical novels are in a different strain. The further he removes his story from his own time, the more pictorial the presentation. His freshness and vigor seize upon the reader; the roots of feeling strike down into the heart of life. The desert scenes in ‘Hypatia,’ the thrilling tragedy of the death of the martyr, which if bad history is admirable fiction, the sea-fight in ‘Westward Ho!’ an epic «not of dull prose but of the thunder roll of Homer's verse,» stir the blood and mock criticism. Concerning the history and the theology the general reader does not concern himself. The genius of the author has already possessed him. Raphael, Wulf, and Amal — beings begot of fancy, dwelling in an unreal time — are more alive than modern photographic realism makes the latest realistic hero.

No writer in the language has shown a greater power of description than Kingsley. Landscape, beast, and bird are invested with poetic charm. He is as close an observer as John Burroughs, and as great an artist as Turner in painting grand effects of sea and sky. There is no elaboration of detail, no exaggeration, in his glimpses of the fens of Devon and the cliffs of Lundy. The writing is alive; the man tells what he has seen; we have the atmospheric effect and the dramatic character. «In one of his pictures of Cornwall,» says Mr. Leslie Stephen, «we can tell the time of day and the state of the weather, as if he were a meteorologist.»

The verdict of time has placed Kingsley among the minor poets. Great things were expected of the author of ‘The Saint's Tragedy.’ ‘Andromeda’ — the most successful attempt in the language in the use of hexameter verse — fulfilled these expectations in a measure. But his genius was not equal to a sustained flight. He will be best remembered by those short dramatic lyrics which he sang in measures approaching perfection.

Kingsley's is a character easy to criticize. He had a feminine side, which in a truly feminine fashion admired force, however exerted; a side which is responsible for that «muscular Christianity» whose paternity he denied. In his rôle of reformer his vehemence and impetuosity stood him in good stead; but impatience like his is the enemy of the grave and noble style. Though not profoundly learned, he had wide and varied information. He came near being a great preacher, for he chose living topics; and he had the gift of clothing in picturesque imagery an abstract truth, first perceived perhaps by a more original mind. He wrote one really great story, 'Hypatia'; and five brilliant ones: 'Yeast,' 'Alton Locke,' 'Hereward the Wake,' 'Westward Ho!' and 'Two Years Ago.' His 'Water-Babies' is one of the few perfect fairy stories in the language. Even its moralities cannot wither it, nor its educational intention stale its infinite variety. He had the lyric quality and the poet's heart. Had he devoted himself to his favorite pursuit, he would have been a famous naturalist. And from his first published work to his premature death he was a distinct moral force in England.

THE MERRY LARK WAS UP AND SINGING

The merry, merry lark was up and singing,
And the hare was out and feeding on the lea,
And the merry, merry bells below were ringing,
When my child's laugh rang through me.
Now the hare is snatched and dead beside the snow-yard,
And the lark beside the dreary winter sea;
And my baby in his cradle in the church-yard
Waiteth there until the bells bring me.

THE DEAD CHURCH

Wild, wild wind, wilt thou never cease thy sighing?
Dark, dark night, wilt thou never wear away?
Cold, cold church, in thy death-sleep lying,
Thy Lent is past, thy Passion here, but not thine Easter Day.

Peace, faint heart, though the night be dark and sighing;
Rest, fair corpse, where thy Lord himself hath lain.
Weep, dear Lord, where thy bride is lying:
Thy tears shall wake her frozen limbs to life and health again.

THE SANDS OF DEE

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee:"
The western wind was wild and dank wi' foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see:
The rolling mist came down and hid the land,
And never home came she.

"Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress o' golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea?"
Was ne'er a salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee.

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee!

YOUTH AND AGE

When all the world is young, lad, and everything is green,
And every goose a swan, lad, and every lass a queen,
Then boot, lad, and horse, lad, and round the world away,
And go it while you're young, lad;—each dog must have his day.

When all the world gets old, lad, and all the trees turn brown,
And all the jests get stale, lad, and all the wheels run down,
Then hie back to thy hame, lad,—the maimed and sick among:
Thank God! if then you find one face you loved when you were young.

A MYTH

A-FLOATING, a-floating
Across the sleeping sea,
All night I heard a singing bird
Upon the topmost tree.

«Oh, came you from the isles of Greece
Or from the banks of Seine;
Or off some tree in forests free,
Which fringe the western main?»

«I came not off the Old World,
Nor yet from off the New;
But I am one of the birds of God
Which sing the whole night through.»

«Oh, sing and wake the dawning—
Oh, whistle for the wind:
The night is long, the current strong,
My boat it lags behind.»

«The current sweeps the Old World,
The current sweeps the New:
The wind will blow, the dawn will glow,
Ere thou hast sailed them through.»

LONGINGS

From ‘The Saint's Tragedy’

OH! THAT we two were Maying
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze;
Like children with violets playing
In the shade of the whispering trees.

Oh! that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimmed down,
Watching the white mist steaming
Over river and mead and town.

Oh! that we two lay sleeping
In our nest in the church-yard sod:
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God.

ANDROMEDA AND THE SEA-NYMPHS

From ‹Andromeda›

Awed by her own rash words she was still, and her eyes to the seaward
Looked for an answer of wrath: far off in the heart of the darkness,
Bright white mists rose slowly; beneath them the wandering ocean
Glimmered and flowed to the deepest abyss; and the knees of the maiden
Trembled and sank in her fear, as afar, like a dawn in the midnight,
Rose from their seaweed chamber the choir of the mystical sea-maids.
Onward toward her they came, and her heart beat loud at their coming,
Watching the bliss of the gods, as wakened the cliffs with their laughter.
Onward they came in their joy, and before them the roll of the surges
Sank, as the breeze sank dead, into smooth green foam-flecked marble,
Awed; and the crags of the cliff and the pines of the mountain were silent.
Onward they came in their joy, and around them the lamps of the sea-nymphs,
Myriad fiery globes, swam panting and heaving; and rainbows,
Crimson and azure and emerald, were broken in star-showers, lighting
Far through the wine-dark depths of the crystal, the gardens of Nereus,
Coral and sea-fan and tangle, the blooms and the palms of the ocean.
Onward they came in their joy, more white than the foam which they scattered,
Laughing and singing, and tossing and twining, while eager, the Tritons
Blinded with kisses their eyes, unreproved, and above them in worship
Hovered the terns, and the sea-gulls swept past them on silvery pinions
Echoing softly their laughter; around them the wantoning dolphins
Sighed as they plunged, full of love; and the great sea-horses which bore them
Curved up their crests in their pride to the delicate arms of the maiden,

Pawing the spray into gems, till the fiery rainfall, unharming,
Sparkled and gleamed on the limbs of the nymphs, and the coils of the mermen.
Onward they went in their joy, bathed round with the fiery coolness,
Needing nor sun nor moon, self-lighted, immortal: but others,
Pitiful, floated in silence apart; in their bosoms the sea-boys,
Slain by the wrath of the seas, swept down by the anger of Nereus:
Hapless, whom never again on strand or on quay shall their mothers
Welcome with garlands and vows to the temple, but wearily pining
Gaze over island and bay for the sails of the sunken; they heedless
Sleep in soft bosoms forever, and dream of the surge and the sea-maids.
Onward they passed in their joy; on their brows neither sorrow nor anger;
Self-sufficing as gods, never heeding the woe of the maiden.

A FAREWELL

My fairest child, I have no song to give you,—
No lark could pipe to skies so dull and gray;
Yet, ere we part, one lesson I can leave you
For every day:

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;
Do noble things, not dream them, all day long:
And so make life, death, and that vast forever
One grand, sweet song.

WAITING FOR THE ARMADA

From ‘Westward Ho!’

See those five talking earnestly, in the centre of a ring, which longs to overhear and yet is too respectful to approach close. Those soft long eyes and pointed chin you recognize already: they are Walter Raleigh's. The fair young man in the flame-colored doublet, whose arm is round Raleigh's neck, is Lord Sheffield; opposite them stands, by the side of Sir Richard Grenville, a man as stately even as he,—Lord Sheffield's uncle, the Lord Charles Howard of Effingham, Lord High Admiral of England; next to him is his son-in-law, Sir Robert Southwell, captain of the Elizabeth Jonas: but who is that short, sturdy, plainly dressed man, who stands with legs a little apart and hands behind his back, looking up, with keen gray eyes, into the face of each speaker? His cap is in his hands, so you can see the bullet head of crisp brown hair and the wrinkled forehead, as well as the high cheek-bones, the short square face, the broad temples, the thick lips which are yet firm as granite. A coarse plebeian stamp of man: yet the whole figure and attitude are that of boundless determination, self-possession, energy; and when at last he speaks a few blunt words, all eyes are turned respectfully upon him,—for his name is Francis Drake.

A burly, grizzled elder, in greasy sea-stained garments contrasting oddly with the huge gold chain about his neck, waddles up, as if he had been born and had lived ever since in a gale of wind at sea. The upper half of his sharp dogged visage seems of brick-red leather, the lower of badger's fur; and as he claps Drake on the back, and with broad Devon twang shouts, "Be you a-coming to drink your wine, Francis Drake, or be you not?—saving your presence, my Lord;" the Lord High Admiral only laughs, and bids Drake go and drink his wine: for John Hawkins, Admiral of the Port, is the Patriarch of Plymouth seamen, if Drake be their hero, and says and does pretty much what he likes in any company on earth; not to mention that to-day's prospect of an Armageddon fight has shaken him altogether out of his usual crabbed reserve, and made him overflow with loquacious good-humor, even to his rival Drake.

So they push through the crowd, wherein is many another man whom one would gladly have spoken with, face to face on earth. Martin Frobisher and John Davis are sitting on that bench, smoking tobacco from long silver pipes; and by them are Fenton and Withrington, who have both tried to follow Drake's path round the world, and failed, though by no fault of their own. The man who pledges them better luck next time is George Fenner, known to "the seven Portugals"; Leicester's pet, and captain of the galleon which Elizabeth bought of him. That short prim man in the huge yellow ruff, with sharp chin, minute imperial, and self-satisfied smile, is Richard Hawkins, the Complete Seaman, Admiral John's hereafter famous and hapless son. The elder who is talking with him is his good uncle William, whose monument still stands, or should stand, in Deptford Church; for Admiral John set it up there but one year after this time, and on it recorded how he was "A worshiper of the true religion, an especial benefactor of poor sailors, a most just arbiter in most difficult causes, and of a singular faith, piety, and prudence." That, and the fact that he got creditably through some sharp work at Porto Rico, is all I know of William Hawkins; but if you or I, reader, can have as much or half as much said of us when we have to follow him, we shall have no reason to complain.

There is John Drake, Sir Francis's brother, ancestor of the present stock of Drakes; and there is George, his nephew, a man not over-wise, who has been round the world with Amyas; and there is Amyas himself, talking to one who answers him with fierce curt sentences,—Captain Barker of Bristol, brother of the hapless Andrew Barker who found John Oxenham's guns, and owing to a mutiny among his men perished by the Spaniards in Honduras twelve years ago. Barker is now captain of the Victory, one of the Queen's best ships; and he has his accounts to settle with the Dons, as Amyas has: so they are both growling together in a corner, while all the rest are as merry as the flies upon the vine above their heads.

But who is the aged man who sits upon a bench, against the sunny south wall of the tavern, his long white beard flowing almost to his waist, his hands upon his knees, his palsied head moving slowly from side to side, to catch the scraps of discourse of the passing captains? . . . It is old Martin Cockrem, father of the ancient host, aged himself beyond the years of men, who can recollect the bells of Plymouth ringing for the coronation of Henry the Eighth, and who was the first Englishman, perhaps, who ever set foot on the soil of the New World. There he sits, like an old Druid Tor of primeval granite amid the tall wheat and rich clover crops of a modern farm. He has seen the death of old Europe and the birth-throes of the new. Go to him, and question him; for his senses are quick as ever, and just now the old man seems uneasy. He is peering with rheumy eyes through the groups, and seems listening for a well-known voice. . . .

"Long life? Iss, fegs, I reckon, long enough already! Why, I mind the beginning of it all, I do. I mind when there wasn't a master mariner to Plymouth that thought there was aught west of the Land's End except herrings. Why, they held then, pure wratches, that if you sailed right west away far enough, you'd surely come to the edge, and fall over cleve. Iss—'twas dark parts round here, till Captain Will arose; and the first of it I mind was inside the bar of San Lucar, and he and I were boys about a ten year old, aboord of a Dartmouth ship, and went for wine; and there come in over the bar he that was the beginning of it all."

"Columbus?"

"Iss, fegs, he did, not a pistol-shot from us; and I saw mun stand on the poop, so plain as I see you: no great shakes of a man to look to neither; there's a sight better here, to plase me: and we was disappointed, we lads, for we surely expected to see mun with a goolden crown on, and a sceptre to a's hand, we did, and the ship o' mun all over like Solomon's temple for gloory. And I mind that same year, too, seeing Vasco da Gama, as was going out over the bar, when he found the Bona Speranza, and sailed round it to the Indies. Ah, that was the making of they rascally Portingals, it was! . . . And our crew told what they seen and heerd; but nobody minded sich things. 'Twas dark parts and Popish, then; and nobody knowed nothing, nor got no schooling, nor cared for nothing, but scrattling up and down alongshore like to prawns in a pule. Iss, sitting in darkness, we was, and the shadow of death, till the day-spring from on high arose, and shined upon us poor out-o'-the-way folk — the Lord be praised! And now, look to mun!" and he waved his hand all round — "look to mun! Look to the works of the Lord! Look to the captains! Oh blessed sight! And one's been to the Brazils, and one to the Indies, and the Spanish Main, and the Northwest, and the Rooshias, and the Chinas, and up the Straits, and round the Cape, and round the world of God too, bless his holy name; and I seed the beginning of it; and I'll see the end of it too, I will! I was born into the old times, but I'll see the wondrous works of the new yet, I will! I'll see they bloody Spaniards swept off the seas before I die, if my old eyes can reach so far as outside the Sound. I shall, I knows it. I says my prayers for it every night: don't I, Mary? You'll bate mun, sure as Judgment, you'll bate mun! The Lord'll fight for ye. Nothing'll stand against ye. I've seed it all along — ever since I was with young master to the Honduras. They can't bide the push of us! You'll bate mun off the face of the seas, and be masters of the round world, and all that therein is. And then I'll just turn my old face to the wall, and depart in peace, according to His word."

A PURITAN CRUSADER

From ‹Plays and Puritans›

Surely these Puritans were dramatic enough, poetic enough, picturesque enough. We do not speak of such fanatics as Balfour of Burley, or any other extravagant person whom it may have suited Walter Scott to take as a typical personage. We speak of the average Puritan nobleman, gentleman, merchant, or farmer: and hold him to have been a picturesque and poetical man,—a man of higher imagination and deeper feeling than the average of court poets; and a man of sound taste also. What is to be said about his opinions about the stage has been seen already; but it seems to have escaped most persons' notice, that either all England is grown very foolish, or the Puritan opinions on several matters have been justified by time.

On the matter of the stage, the world has certainly come over to their way of thinking. Few highly educated men now think it worth while to go to see any play, and that exactly for the same reasons as the Puritans put forward; and still fewer highly educated men think it worth while to write plays, finding that since the grosser excitements of the imagination have become forbidden themes there is really very little to write about.

But in the matter of dress and of manners, the Puritan triumph has been complete. Even their worst enemies have come over to their side, and «the whirligig of time has brought its revenges.»

Most of their canons of taste have become those of all England. High-Churchmen, who still call them Roundheads and Cropped-ears, go about rounder-headed and closer cropt than they ever went. They held it more rational to cut the hair to a comfortable length than to wear effeminate curls down the back: we cut ours much shorter than they ever did. They held (with the Spaniards, then the finest gentlemen in the world) that sad (that is, dark) colors—above all, black—were the fittest for all stately and earnest gentlemen: we all, from the Tractarian to the Anythingarian, are exactly of the same opinion. They held that lace, perfumes, and jewelry on a man were marks of unmanly foppishness and vanity: so hold the finest gentlemen in England now. They thought it equally absurd and sinful for a man to carry his income on his back, and bedizen himself out in reds, blues, and greens, ribbons, knots, slashes, and «treble, quadruple, dædalian ruffs, built up on iron and timber, which have more arches in them for pride than London Bridge for use»: we, if we met such a ruffed and ruffled worthy as used to swagger by dozens up and down Paul's Walk, not knowing how to get a dinner, much less to pay his tailor, should look on him as firstly a fool, and secondly a swindler; while if we met an old Puritan, we should consider him a man gracefully and picturesquely dressed, but withal in the most perfect sobriety of good taste: and when we discovered (as we probably should), over and above, that the harlequin cavalier had a box of salve and a pair of dice in one pocket, a pack of cards and a few pawnbrokers' duplicates in the other; that his thoughts were altogether of citizens' wives and their too easy virtue; and that he could not open his mouth without a dozen oaths,—then we should consider the Puritan (even though he did quote Scripture somewhat through his nose) as the gentleman; and the courtier as a most offensive specimen of the «snob triumphant,» glorying in his shame. The picture is not ours, nor even the Puritan's. It is Bishop Hall's, Bishop Earle's; it is Beaumont's, Fletcher's, Jonson's, Shakespeare's,—the picture which every dramatist, as well as satirist, has drawn of the «gallant» of the seventeenth century. No one can read those writers honestly without seeing that the Puritan and not the Cavalier conception of what a British gentleman should be, is the one accepted by the whole nation at this day.

In applying the same canon to the dress of women, they were wrong. As in other matters, they had hold of one pole of a double truth, and erred in applying it exclusively to all cases. But there are two things to be said for them: first, that the dress of that day was palpably an incentive to the profligacy of that day, and therefore had to be protested against; while in these more moral times, ornaments and fashions may be harmlessly used which then could not be used without harm. Next, it is undeniable that sober dressing is more and more becoming the fashion among well-bred women; and that among them too the Puritan canons are gaining ground.

We have just said that the Puritans held too exclusively to one pole of a double truth. They did so, no doubt, in their hatred of the drama. Their belief that human relations were, if not exactly sinful, at least altogether carnal and unspiritual, prevented their conceiving the possibility of any truly Christian drama; and led them at times into strange and sad errors, like that New England ukase of Cotton Mather's, who is said to have punished the woman who should kiss her infant on the Sabbath day.* Yet their extravagances on this point were but the honest revulsion from other extravagances on the opposite side. If the undistinguishing and immoral Autotheism of the playwrights, and the luxury and heathendom of the higher classes, first in Italy and then in England, were the natural revolt of the human mind against the Manichæism of monkery, then the severity and exclusiveness of Puritanism was a natural and necessary revolt against that luxury and immorality; a protest for man's God-given superiority over nature, against that Naturalism which threatened to end in sheer animalism. While Italian prelates have found an apologist in Mr. Roscoe, and English playwrights in Mr. Gifford, the old Puritans — who felt and asserted, however extravagantly, that there was an eternal law which was above all Borgias and Machiavels, Stuarts and Fletchers — have surely a right to a fair trial. If they went too far in their contempt for humanity, certainly no one interfered to set them right. The Anglicans of that time, who held intrinsically the same anthropologic notions, and yet wanted the courage and sincerity to carry them out as honestly, neither could nor would throw any light upon the controversy. . . .

But as for these Puritans having been merely the sour, narrow, inhuman persons they are vulgarly supposed to have been, *credat Judæus*. There were sour and narrow men among them; so there were in the opposite party. No Puritan could have had less poetry in him, less taste, less feeling, than Laud himself. But is there no poetry save words? no drama save that which is presented on the stage? Is this glorious earth, and the souls of living men, mere prose as long as "*carent vate sacro*," who will forsooth do them the honor to make poetry out of a little of them (and of how little!) by translating them into words, which he himself, just in proportion as he is a good poet, will confess to be clumsy, tawdry, ineffectual? Was there no poetry in these Puritans because they wrote no poetry? We do not mean now the unwritten tragedy of the battle psalm and the charge; but simple idyllic poetry and quiet home drama, — love poetry of the heart and the hearth, and the beauties of every-day human life. Take the most commonplace of them: was Zeal-for-Truth

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* Of course neither this supposed enactment nor the other "Blue Laws" ever existed, being pure inventions of a revengeful Loyalist. — Ed.

Thoresby of Thoresby Rise in Deeping Fen, because his father had thought fit to give him an ugly and silly name, the less of a noble lad? Did his name prevent his being six feet high? Were his shoulders the less broad for it, his cheeks the less ruddy for it? He wore his flaxen hair of the same length that every one now wears his, instead of letting it hang half-way to his waist in essenced curls; but was he therefore the less of a true Viking's son, bold-hearted as his sea-roving ancestors who won the Danelagh by Canute's side, and settled there on Thoresby Rise, to grow wheat and breed horses, generation succeeding generation, in the old moated grange? He carried a Bible in his jack-boot; but did that prevent him, as Oliver rode past him with an approving smile on Naseby field, thinking himself a very handsome fellow, with his mustache and imperial, and bright-red coat, and cuirass well polished, in spite of many a dint, as he sate his father's great black horse as gracefully and firmly as any long-locked and essenced cavalier in front of him? Or did it prevent him thinking too, for a moment, with a throb of the heart, that sweet Cousin Patience far away at home, could she but see him, might have the same opinion of him as he had of himself? Was he the worse for the thought? He was certainly not the worse for checking it the next instant, with manly shame for letting such «carnal vanities» rise in his heart while he was «doing the Lord's work» in the teeth of death and hell; but was there no poetry in him then? No poetry in him, five minutes after, as the long rapier swung round his head, redder and redder at every sweep? We are befooled by names. Call him Crusader instead of Roundhead, and he seems at once (granting him only sincerity, which he had, and that of a right awful kind) as complete a knight-errant as ever watched and prayed, ere putting on his spurs, in fantastic Gothic chapel, beneath «storied windows richly dight.» Was there no poetry in him, either, half an hour afterwards, as he lay bleeding across the corpse of the gallant horse, waiting for his turn with the surgeon, and fumbled for the Bible in his boot, and tried to hum a psalm, and thought of Cousin Patience, and his father, and his mother, and how they would hear at least that he had played the man in Israel that day, and resisted unto blood, striving against sin and the Man of Sin?

And was there no poetry in him too, as he came wearied along Thoresby dike, in the quiet autumn eve, home to the house of his forefathers; and saw afar off the knot of tall poplars rising over the broad misty flat, and the one great abele tossing its sheets of silver in the dying gusts, and knew that they stood before his father's door? Who can tell all the pretty child memories which flitted across his brain at that sight, and made him forget that he was a wounded cripple? There is the dike where he and his brothers snared the great pike which stole the ducklings — how many years ago? — while pretty little Patience stood by trembling, and shrieked at each snap of the brute's wide jaws; and there, down that long dark lode, ruffling with crimson in the sunset breeze, he and his brothers skated home in triumph with Patience when his uncle died. What a day that was! when in the clear bright winter noon they laid the gate upon the ice, and tied the beef-bones under the four corners, and packed little Patience on it! — How pretty she looked, though her eyes were red with weeping, as she peeped out from among the heap of blankets and horse-hides; and how merrily their long fen-runners whistled along the ice-lane, between the high bank of sighing reed, at a pace like the race-horse's, to the dear old home among the poplar-trees. And now he was going home to meet her after a mighty victory, a deliverance from heaven; second only in his eyes to that Red Sea one. Was there no poetry in his heart at that thought? Did not the glowing sunset, and the reed-beds which it transfigured before him into sheets of golden flame, seem tokens that the glory of God was going before him in his path? Did not the sweet clamor of the wild-fowl, gathering for one rich pæan ere they sank into rest, seem to him as God's bells chiming him home in triumph, with peals sweeter and bolder than those of Lincoln or Peterborough steeple-house? Did not the very lapwing, as she tumbled softly wailing before him, as she did years ago, seem to welcome the wanderer home in the name of heaven?

Fair Patience, too — though she was a Puritan, yet did not her cheek flush, her eyes grow dim, like any other girl's, as she saw far off the red coat, like a sliding spark of fire, coming slowly along the strait fen-bank, and fled up-stairs into her chamber to pray, half that it might be, half that it might not be he? Was there no happy storm of human tears and human laughter when he entered the court-yard gate? Did not the old dog lick his Puritan hand as lovingly as if it had been a Cavalier's? Did not lads and lasses run out shouting? Did not the old yeoman father hug him, weep over him, hold him at arm's-length, and hug him again, as heartily as any other John Bull; even though the next moment he called all to kneel down and thank Him who had sent his boy home again, after bestowing on him the grace to bind kings in chains and nobles with links of iron, and contend to death for the faith delivered to the saints? And did not Zeal-for-Truth look about as wistfully for Patience as any other man would have done; longing to see her, yet not daring even to ask for her? And when she came down at last, was she the less lovely in his eyes because she came, not flaunting with bare bosom, in tawdry finery and paint, but shrouded close in coif and pinner, hiding from all the world beauty which was there still, but was meant for one alone, and that only if God willed, in God's good time? And was there no faltering of their voices, no light in their eyes, no trembling pressure of their hands, which said more, and was more — ay, and more beautiful in the sight of Him who made them — than all Herrick's Dianemes, Waller's Saccharissas, flames, darts, posies, love-knots, anagrams, and the rest of the insincere cant of the court? What if Zeal-for-Truth had never strung two rhymes together in his life? Did not his heart go for inspiration to a loftier Helicon, when it whispered to itself, "My love, my dove, my undefiled, is but one," than if he had filled pages with sonnets about Venuses and Cupids, love-sick shepherds and cruel nymphs?

And was there no poetry — true idyllic poetry, as of Longfellow's 'Evangeline' itself — in that trip round the old farm next morning; when Zeal-for-Truth, after looking over every heifer and peeping into every sty, would needs canter down by his father's side to the horse-fen, with his arm in a sling; while the partridges whirred up before them, and the lurchers flashed like gray snakes after the hare, and the colts came whinnying round, with staring eyes and streaming manes; and the two chatted on in the same sober business-like English tone, alternately of "the Lord's great dealings" by General Cromwell, the pride of all honest fen-men, and the price of troop-horses at the next Horncastle fair?

Poetry in those old Puritans? Why not? They were men of like passions with ourselves. They loved, they married, they brought up children; they feared, they sinned, they sorrowed, they fought — they conquered. There was poetry enough in them, be sure, though they acted it like men instead of singing it like birds.

THE SALMON RIVER

From the 'Water-Babies'

AND then, on the evening of a very hot day, he saw a sight.

He had been very stupid all day, and so had the trout; for they would not move an inch to take a fly, though there were thousands on the water, but lay dozing at the bottom under the shade of the stones; and Tom lay dozing too, and was glad to cuddle their smooth, cool sides, for the water was quite warm and unpleasant.

But toward evening it grew suddenly dark; and Tom looked up and saw a blanket of black clouds lying right across the valley above his head, resting on the crags right and left. He felt not quite frightened, but very still; for everything was still. There was not a whisper of wind nor a chirp of a bird to be heard; and next a few great drops of rain fell plop into the water, and one hit Tom on the nose, and made him pop his head down quickly enough.

And then the thunder roared, and the lightning flashed, and leaped across Vendale and back again, from cloud to cloud and cliff to cliff, till the very rocks in the stream seemed to shake; and Tom looked up at it through the water, and thought it the finest thing he ever saw in his life.

But out of the water he dared not put his head; for the rain came down by bucketfuls, and the hail hammered like shot on the stream, and churned it into foam; and soon the stream rose and rushed down, higher and higher and fouler and fouler, full of beetles, and sticks and straws, and worms and addle-eggs, and wood-lice and leeches, and odds and ends, and omnium-gatherums, and this, that, and the other, enough to fill nine museums.

Tom could hardly stand against the stream, and hid behind a rock. But the trout did not; for out they rushed from among the stones, and began gobbling the beetles and leeches in the most greedy and quarrelsome way; and swimming about with great worms hanging out of their mouths, tugging and kicking to get them away from each other.

And now, by the flashes of the lightning, Tom saw a new sight,— all the bottom of the stream alive with great eels, turning and twisting along, all down-stream and away. They had been hiding for weeks past in the cracks of the rocks, and in burrows in the mud; and Tom had hardly ever seen them, except now and then at night; but now they were all out, and went hurrying past him so fiercely and wildly that he was quite frightened. And as they hurried past he could hear them say to each other, « We must run, we must run. What a jolly thunder-storm! Down to the sea, down to the sea! »

And then the otter came by with all her brood, twining and sweeping along as fast as the eels themselves; and she spied Tom as she came by, and said:—

« Now is your time, eft, if you want to see the world. Come along, children, never mind those nasty eels: we shall breakfast on salmon to-morrow. Down to the sea, down to the sea! »

Then came a flash brighter than all the rest; and by the light of it—in the thousandth part of a second they were gone again, but he had seen them, he was certain of it—three beautiful little white girls, with their arms twined round each other's necks, floating down the torrent as they sang, « Down to the sea, down to the sea! »

« Oh, stay! Wait for me! » cried Tom; but they were gone; yet he could hear their voices clear and sweet through the roar of thunder and water and wind, singing as they died away, « Down to the sea! »

« Down to the sea? » said Tom: « everything is going to the sea, and I will go too. Good-by, trout. » But the trout were so busy gobbling worms that they never turned to answer him; so that Tom was spared the pain of bidding them farewell.

And now, down the rushing stream, guided by the bright flashes of the storm; past tall birch-fringed rocks, which shone out one moment as clear as day, and the next were dark as night; past dark hovers under swirling banks, from which great trout rushed out on Tom, thinking him to be good to eat, and turned back sulkily, for the fairies sent them home again with a tremendous scolding for daring to meddle with a water-baby; on through narrow strids and roaring cataracts, where Tom was deafened and blinded for a moment by the rushing waters; along deep reaches, where the white water-lilies tossed and flapped beneath the wind and hail; past sleeping villages, under dark bridge arches, and away and away to the sea. And Tom could not stop, and did not care to stop: he would see the great world below, and the salmon and the breakers and the wide, wide sea.

And when the daylight came, Tom found himself out in the salmon river.

And what sort of a river was it? Was it like an Irish stream winding through the brown bogs, where the wild ducks squatter up from among the white water-lilies, and the curlews flit to and fro, crying, "Tullie-wheep, mind your sheep," and Dennis tells you strange stories of the Peishtamore, the great bogy-snake which lies in the black peat pools, among the old pine stems, and puts his head out at night to snap at the cattle as they come down to drink? But you must not believe all that Dennis tells you, mind; for if you ask him—

"Is there a salmon here, do you think, Dennis?"

"Is it salmon, thin, your Honor manes? Salmon? Cart-loads it is of thim, thin, an' ridgmens, shouldthering ache ither out of water, av ye'd but the luck to see thim."

Then you fish the pool all over, and never get a rise.

"But there can't be a salmon here, Dennis! and if you'll but think, if one had come up last tide, he'd be gone to the higher pools by now."

"Sure, thin, and your Honor's the thrue fisherman, and understands it all like a book. Why, ye spake as if ye'd known the wather a thousand years! As I said, how could there be a fish here at all, just now?"

"But you said just now they were shouldering each other out of water."

And then Dennis will look up at you with his handsome, sly, soft, sleepy, good-natured, untrustable, Irish gray eye, and answer with the prettiest smile:—

"Sure, and didn't I think your Honor would like a pleasant answer?"

So you must not trust Dennis, because he is in the habit of giving pleasant answers; but instead of being angry with him, you must remember that he is a poor Paddy, and knows no better: so you must just burst out laughing; and then he will burst out laughing too, and slave for you, and trot about after you, and show you good sport if he can,—for he is an affectionate fellow, and as fond of sport as you are,—and if he can't, tell you fibs instead, a hundred an hour; and wonder all the while why poor ould Ireland does not prosper like England and Scotland and some other places, where folk have taken up a ridiculous fancy that honesty is the best policy.

Or was it like a Welsh salmon river, which is remarkable chiefly (at least, till this last year) for containing no salmon, as they have been all poached out by the enlighted peasantry, to prevent the *Cythrawl Sassenach* (which means you, my little dear, your kith and kin, and signifies much the same as the Chinese *Fan Quci*) from coming bothering into Wales, with good tackle and ready money, and civilization and common honesty, and other like things of which the Cymry stand in no need whatsoever?

Or was it such a salmon stream as I trust you will see among the Hampshire water-meadows before your hairs are gray, under the wise new fishing-laws — when Winchester apprentices shall covenant, as they did three hundred years ago, not to be made to eat salmon more than three days a week, and fresh-run fish shall be as plentiful under Salisbury spire as they are in Holly-hole at Christchurch; in the good time coming, when folks shall see that of all Heaven's gifts of food, the one to be protected most carefully is that worthy gentleman salmon, who is generous enough to go down to the sea weighing five ounces, and to come back next year weighing five pounds, without having cost the soil or the State one farthing?

Or was it like a Scotch stream such as Arthur Clough drew in his 'Bothie'? —

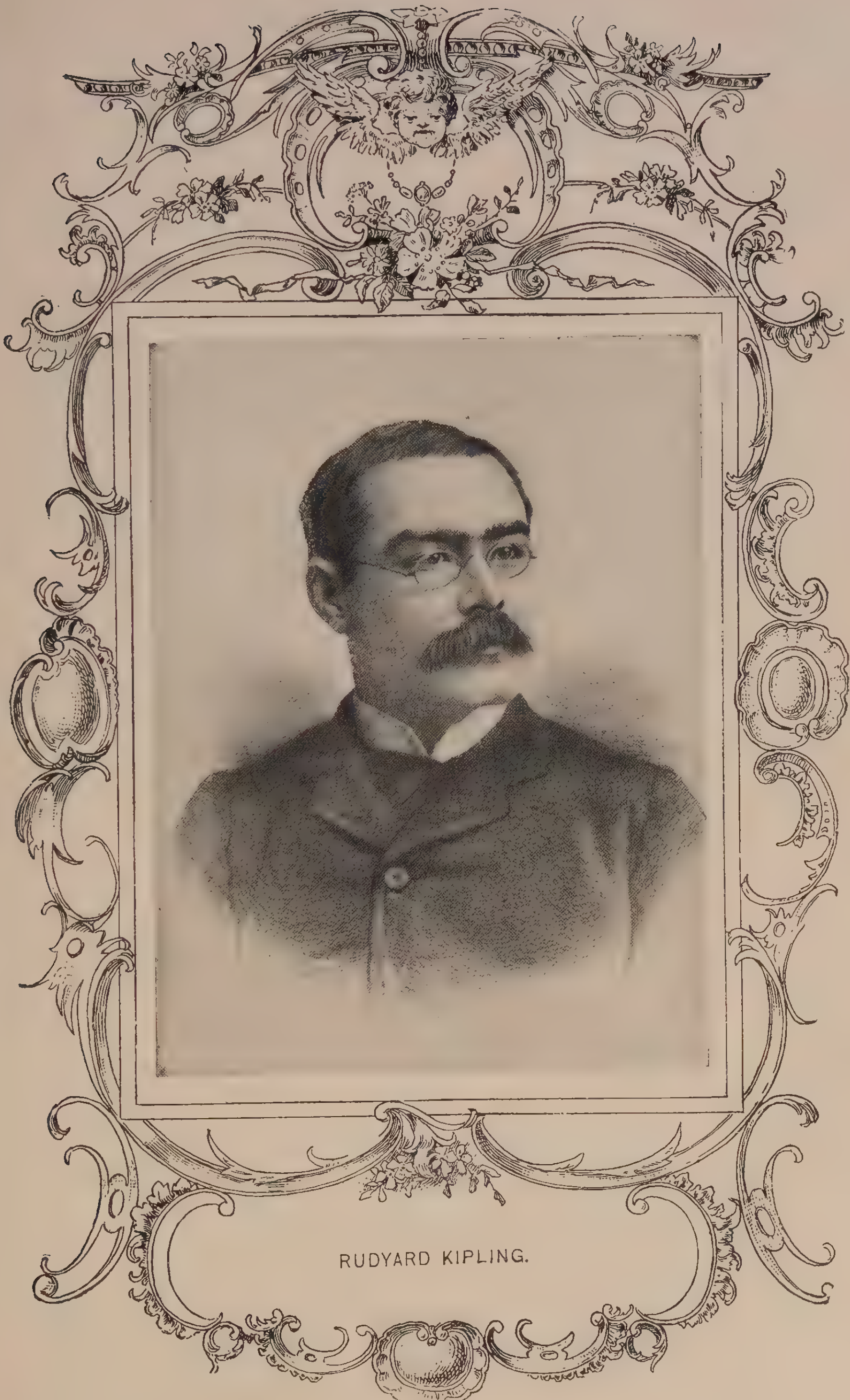
> «Where over a ledge of granite
> Into a granite basin the amber torrent descended. . . .
> Beautiful there for the color derived from green rocks under;
> Beautiful most of all, where beads of foam uprising
> Mingle their clouds of white with the delicate hue of the stillness. . . .
> Cliff over cliff for its sides, with rowan and pendent birch boughs.» . . .

Ah, my little man, when you are a big man, and fish such a stream as that, you will hardly care, I think, whether she be roaring down in full spate, like coffee covered with scald cream, while the fish are swirling at your fly as an oar-blade swirls in a boat-race, or flashing up the cataract like silver arrows, out of the fiercest of the foam; or whether the fall be dwindled to a single thread, and the shingle below be as white and dusty as a turnpike road, while the salmon huddle together in one dark cloud in the clear amber pool, sleeping away their time till the rain creeps back again off the sea You will not care much, if you have eyes and brains; for you will lay down your rod contentedly, and drink in at your eyes the beauty of that glorious place, and listen to the water-ouzel piping on the stones, and watch the yellow roes come down to drink and look up at you with their great soft, trustful eyes, as much as to say, "You could not have the heart to shoot at us." And then, if you have sense, you will turn and talk to the great giant of a gilly who lies basking on the stone beside you. He will tell you no fibs, my little man, for he is a Scotchman, and fears God; and as you talk with him you will be surprised more and more at his knowledge, his sense, his humor, his courtesy; and you will find out — unless you have found it out before — that a man may learn from his Bible to be a more thorough gentleman than if he had been brought up in all the drawing-rooms in London.

No. It was none of these, the salmon stream at Harthover. It was such a stream as you see in dear old Bewick — Bewick, who was born and bred upon them. A full hundred yards broad it was, sliding on from broad pool to broad shallow, and broad shallow to broad pool, over great fields of shingle, under oak and ash coverts, past low cliffs of sandstone, past green meadows and fair parks, and a great house of gray stone, and brown moors above, and here and there against the sky the smoking chimney of a colliery. You must look at Bewick to see just what it was like, for he has drawn it a hundred times with the care and the love of a true north-countryman; and even if you do not care about the salmon river, you ought like all good boys to know your Bewick.

At least, so old Sir John used to say; and very sensibly he put it too, as he was wont to do:—

"If they want to describe a finished young gentleman in France, I hear, they say of him, 'Il sait son Rabelais.' But if I want to describe one in England, I say, 'He knows his Bewick.' And I think that is the higher compliment."



RUDYARD KIPLING.

RUDYARD KIPLING

(1865–)

Rudyard Kipling, still a young man in the early thirties, is a dominant figure and force in current English literature. He has passed successfully through the preliminary stages of uncritical popularity to receive the most careful critical consideration as story-teller and poet. He has brought a new and striking personality into the literature of the day: with a splendid vigor, breadth, and directness he has given literary expression to entirely fresh and interesting phases of the life in wide regions of the English-speaking peoples; and he has with a noble realism proved in his work the possibility, to genius, of using the practical rushing late nineteenth century — with its machinery, science-worship, and struggle for place — as rich material for imaginative treatment in literature. In a fairly epic way he has constituted himself, in song and story, the chronicler and minstrel of the far-scattered colonial English.

Kipling's birth, education, and early experience were such as to qualify him for his elected work in the world. He was born in Christmas week, 1865, in Bombay, a city he has celebrated in verse:

«A thousand mills roar through me where I glean
All races from all lands.»

His father, Mr. Lockwood Kipling, is a cultured writer, art teacher, and illustrator, who has used his talent in making pictures and decorations for the «In Black and White» standard edition of his son's works, published by the Scribners in New York in 1897. Rudyard's school-life was passed in England, giving him the opportunity to see the Britisher in his native island. Then, when he was but seventeen, came the return to India for rough-and-ready journalistic work, as sub-editor of the Lahore Civil and Military Gazette,— with all its necessity of close observation and inevitable assimilation of that life. Kipling took the shortest cut to the writer's trade; namely, he wrote daily and under pressure. Some of his best tales — notably ‘The Man Who Would Be King’— vividly present this newspaper experience, which was indubitably a good thing for a man like Kipling. Meanwhile, in the intervals of supplying mere prosaic «copy,» for which there was a loud call in the composing-room, he was doing what many another hard-worked newspaper man has done before him. turning out stories and verses — which were quickly caught up by the press and circulated through East India. Then Kipling, in 1886, having attained to man's estate in years, had bound up in rough fashion in his office a small volume of his verse: «a lean oblong docket, wire-stitched, to imitate a D. O. government envelope, printed on one side only, bound in brown paper and secured with red tape.» And this bard's bantling had a good sale thereabouts; and as he himself puts it, «at last the book came to London with a gilt top and a stiff back.» Its subsequent history is not private: few first volumes have had so cordial a reception. The Indian stories too, ‹Plain Tales from the Hills› (1888), were collected in book shape, eagerly read by the writer's local clientèle, and found a continually widening public. Kipling's verse and prose were of honestest birth: sprung from local experience, his writings appealed primarily to a local audience; but possessing the essential qualities and interests, the work proved acceptable to anybody on earth capable of being moved by the earnest, truthful, forcible portrayal of life in words. When ‹Plain Tales from the Hills› appeared as a book, it was seen to be the manifesto of a new talent. The vitality, distinction, newness of theme, the pathos, drama, and humor of the work, set it clean aside from anything else contemporaneous in fiction of the short-story kind. The defects in the earlier books were an occasional abuse of the technical in word or allusion, and a young-man cynicism, appearing especially in the Gadsby series, — a mood soon sloughed off by the maturer Kipling. But the merits were of the overpowering sort, and the dynamic force of the tales was beyond question. That a man but little more than twenty should have written them made the performance spectacular. In the use of plain Biblical language and the selection of realistic themes there was something of the audacity and immediateness of journalism; but the result almost always justified the method.

The tales found in the volumes — about a dozen in number — published between 1886 and 1895, are of several kinds. Some treat pathetic, realistic, or weirdly sombre situations, either of native or soldier life: a class containing some masterpieces, of which ‹The Man Who Would Be King,› ‹The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes,› ‹The Mark of the Beast,› ‹Without Benefit of Clergy,› ‹The Phantom Rickshaw,› and ‹Beyond the Pale› are illustrations. Another division, of which ‹Wee Willie Winkie› is the type, grouped in the book ‹Wee Willie Winkie and Other Stories› (1888), deals with children, and exhibits a very winning aspect of the author. Still another contains the humorous cycle personified in the inimitable triad Mulvaney, Ortheris, and Learoyd, brought into an artistic unity by their common lot as British-Indian privates (with Dinah Shadd as a minor deity), one of the most spontaneous and successful of Kipling's ventures. The three sharply differentiated individualities have a reality as tangible as Dumas's Guardsmen. The range and variety of the stories under these heads furnish an emphatic testimonial to Kipling's many-sidedness. The successive volumes of short stories, from 'Plain Tales' to 'Many Inventions' in 1893, have only strengthened the feeling made by his début. The work has been prevailingly, though by no means exclusively, inspired by Anglo-Indian motives;—one such exception as the superbly imaginative psychologic study, 'A Disturber of Traffic,' indicates his independence of any prescribed place or subject. Kipling went to England in 1889, and a little later settled in the United States, where he married Miss Balestier, the sister of his friend Wolcott Balestier, with whom he collaborated in the novel 'The Naulakha'; a name he afterwards gave to the sightly house he has built in Brattleboro, Vermont. His English and American experience has entered into and somewhat conditioned his fiction, which so far however has made its most distinct impression when it has come out of the East. But whatever the material of the art, the Kiplingesque attributes are pretty steadily present: a sinewy vernacular strength and beauty of diction; a wonderful power to see and to represent with bold synthetic effect; and a deep, broad, brotherly apprehension of the large fundamental passions and interests of humanity. If one had to name off-hand the qualities most noticeable in Kipling's short stories, one would say, strength and democratic sympathy.

Having done short-story work of so much power and flexibility, Kipling in 1894 produced that unique and wonderful series of animal fables, 'The Jungle Book'; a 'Second Jungle Book' following in 1895. Here was an absolutely fresh handling of the beast-epic,—a theme familiar since the Middle Ages. But Kipling's attitude is new: the beast kind are considered from their own side of the fence, and man is an inferior rather than superior race. The writer's marvelous comprehension of animal life, and his equally marvelous technical knowledge of the Indian beast haunts, combine to give to what might have been grotesquely imaginative the realism of a latter-day annal; and a rich ethical suggestion covers it like an atmosphere. Kipling has given no plainer proof of his rightful claim to greatness than these Jungle fables. His Mowgli is a creation as definite as any of Æsop's; and its note of sympathy has a modernness which appeals to the present-day reader.

The essays in full-length fiction also call for attention; though this work is, up to the present, minor. In 1890 appeared 'The Light that Failed'; a novelette which certainly possesses strength of description and characterization, with some very dramatic scenes, but which does not strike one as having the form germane to the writer's genius. 'The Naulakha' (1892) is a very readable novel, the second part of which, where the scene shifts from the western United States to India, and some gruesomely powerful situations are well handled, Kipling is responsible for. The book as a whole is not close-knit enough nor homogeneous enough to make it an impressive piece of sustained art-work. Nor, judging Kipling by the high standard set by his own short tales, can the 'Captains Courageous' (1897)—a spirited narrative of the Gloucester (Massachusetts) fishermen, and the first long study of American life he has made (the short story 'The Walking Delegate' also used a piquant American subject)—be ranked among his major works. In a word, Kipling has so far found his authentic prose utterance in the short-story form.

It remains to speak of his poetry, which is now seen to be one of the most important outcomes of his literary genius. Readers of Kipling's short stories were early attracted by the snatches of verse mysteriously prefixed thereto and ascribed to imaginary sources. These fragments were sometimes startling for power and felicity in the pathetic, dramatic, and satiric veins. But before long the books of verse which appeared were a notification—if any were needed, for Kipling is a prose poet in much of his fiction—that the virile young Anglo-Indian must be reckoned with both as singer and sayer. 'Departmental Ditties and Other Verses' (1891), 'Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses' (1892), and 'The Seven Seas' (1896), are collections of steadily ascending worth and importance. Kipling has come to his position as poet later and more slowly than was the case with his fiction; but his seat will be quite as secure, for recognition among the judicious is now general and hearty. His first appeal was as a maker of rollicking rhymes, in which the common British soldier in his picturesque variations was hymned and limned. Kipling became the barrack-room bard whose seamy heroes, Danny Deever, Tommy Atkins, Bill 'Awkins, and their likes, were drawn in their habits as they lived, in their dramatic virtues and equally dramatic sins. The zest, the high-heartedness, and the infectious lilt of these verses were such as to commend them not only to the military of many lands, but to the great international democracy of civilians who love vital literature. The accent was caught, the epic of the rank-and-file revealed.

Had Kipling done no more than the barrack-room songs, he would have won place as a verse-writer; but his flight has been freer and higher. In his latest poetic utterance he has published himself as the "bard of the greater Britain," the uncrowned laureate of the whole English-speaking folk wherever established. He has shown himself the strongest living ballad-writer of the tongue. Tennyson, shortly before his death, wrote Kipling concerning ‘The Ballad of East and West’ that it was the *finest* thing of the kind in English verse. ‘The English Flag,’ ‘The Last Chantey,’ ‘A Song of the English,’ ‘McAndrew’s Hymn,’ ‘The Native Born,’—such pieces as these could come only from a man of puissant power. Kipling has seized, with superb courage and strong grasp, upon contemporaneous motives whose connotation is what we call practical, even vulgar; and as only the largely endowed, truly called poet can, has lifted the bald subject into the higher realms of imaginative thought and feeling. This is the truest of all idealism, because it stands four-square upon fact. A horny-handed and sin-seared skipper, a lawless soldier with a light-o’-love in every port, a cattle-keeper on shipboard, an engineer amidst his oily engines, are put before us so that we recognize them as lovable fellow-creatures, responsive to the «thousandfold thrill of life.» An electric cable, a steam-engine, a banjo, or a mess-room toast offer occasion for song; and lo, they are converted by the alchemy of the imagination until they become a type and an illumination of the red-blooded life of human kind. The ability to achieve this is a crowning characteristic and merit of Rudyard Kipling’s poetry.

It is unnecessary to ask if Kipling’s American residence will more and more color his work. Where he finds his stimulus is immaterial, so long as the resulting literature is good. His is a restless spirit, with the adventure quest in the blood, implied in the short compact figure and the thin alert face, out of which keen eyes behind glasses peer forth at the human show. He likes to exchange at short notice the New England hills for the London club or the Indian bungalow. It is enough to be sure he will follow the Terentian injunction, surveying men and morals widely and closely and deeming nothing human alien to his interest. Prophecy concerning his literary work still to come is likewise foolish. The conventional remark that he has shown great promise, with the implied postponement of full accomplishment to the limbo of a dim imaginary future, is not applicable to a Kipling. Already his promise has become performance: he has done enough to display his genius and define his place with the few modern English authors of originality, force, and superlative gift. He is an answer in the concrete to the dyspeptic query, «What is the end of the present century doing in literature?»

WITHOUT BENEFIT OF CLERGY

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« But if it be a girl?»

« Lord of my life, it cannot be! I have prayed for so many nights, and sent gifts to Sheikh Badl's shrine so often, that I know God will give us a son — a man-child that shall grow into a man. Think of this and be glad. My mother shall be his mother till I can take him again, and the mullah of the Pattan Mosque shall cast his nativity — God send he be born in an auspicious hour! — and then and then thou wilt never weary of me, thy slave.»

« Since when hast thou been a slave, my queen?»

« Since the beginning — till this mercy came to me. How could I be sure of thy love when I knew that I had been bought with silver?»

« Nay, that was the dowry. I paid it to thy mother.»

«And she has buried it, and sits upon it all day long like a hen. What talk is yours of dowry? I was bought as though I had been a Lucknow dancing-girl instead of a child.»

«Art thou sorry for the sale?»

« I have sorrowed; but to-day I am glad. Thou wilt never cease to love me now? Answer, my king.»

« Never — never. No.»

« Not even though the *mem-log* — the white women of thy own blood — love thee? And remember, I have watched them driving in the evening; they are very fair.»

« I have seen fire-balloons by the hundred; I have seen the moon, and — then I saw no more fire-balloons.»

Ameera clapped her hands and laughed. « Very good talk,» she said. Then, with an assumption of great stateliness, « It is enough. Thou hast my permission to depart — if thou wilt.»

The man did not move. He was sitting on a low red-lacquered couch, in a room furnished only with a blue-and-white floor-cloth, some rugs, and a very complete collection of native cushions. At his feet sat a woman of sixteen, and she was all-but all the world in his eyes. By every rule and law she should have been otherwise; for he was an Englishman and she a Mussulman's daughter, bought two years before from her mother, who being left without money, would have sold Ameera, shrieking, to the Prince of Darkness, if the price had been sufficient.

It was a contract entered into with a light heart. But even before the girl had reached her bloom she came to fill the greater portion of John Holden's life. For her and the withered hag, her mother, he had taken a little house overlooking the great red-walled city, and found, when the marigolds had sprung up by the well in the court-yard, and Ameera had established herself according to her own ideas of comfort, and her mother had ceased grumbling at the inadequacy of the cooking-places, the distance from the daily market, and matters of housekeeping in general, that the house was to him his home. Any one could enter his bachelor's bungalow by day or night, and the life that he led there was an unlovely one. In the house in the city, his feet only could pass beyond the outer court-yard to the women's rooms; and when the big wooden gate was bolted behind him he was king in his own territory, with Ameera for queen. And there was going to be added to his kingdom a third person, whose arrival Holden felt inclined to resent. It interfered with his perfect happiness. It disarranged the orderly peace of the house that was his own. But Ameera was wild with delight at the thought of it, and her mother not less so. The love of a man, and particularly a white man, was at the best an inconstant affair; but it might, both women argued, be held fast by a baby's hands. "And then," Ameera would always say—"then he will never care for the white *mem-log*. I hate them all—I hate them all."

"He will go back to his own people in time," said the mother; "but by the blessing of God, that time is yet afar off."

Holden sat silent on the couch, thinking of the future, and his thoughts were not pleasant. The drawbacks of a double life are manifold. The government, with singular care, had ordered him out of the station for a fortnight on special duty, in the place of a man who was watching by the bedside of a sick wife. The verbal notification of the transfer had been edged by a cheerful remark that Holden ought to think himself lucky in being a bachelor and a free man. He came to break the news to Ameera.

"It is not good," she said slowly, "but it is not all bad. There is my mother here, and no harm will come to me—unless indeed I die of pure joy. Go thou to thy work, and think no troublesome thoughts. When the days are done, I believe—nay, I am sure. And—and then I shall lay *him* in thy arms, and thou wilt love me forever. The train goes to-night — at midnight, is it not? Go now, and do not let thy heart be heavy by cause of me. But thou wilt not delay in returning! Thou wilt not stay on the road to talk to the bold white *mem-log!* Come back to me swiftly, my life!"

As he left the court-yard to reach his horse, that was tethered to the gate-post, Holden spoke to the white-haired old watchman who guarded the house, and bade him under certain contingencies dispatch the filled-up telegraph form that Holden gave him. It was all that could be done; and with the sensations of a man who has attended his own funeral, Holden went away by the night mail to his exile. Every hour of the day he dreaded the arrival of the telegram, and every hour of the night he pictured to himself the death of Ameera. In consequence, his work for the State was not of first-rate quality, nor was his temper towards his colleagues of the most amiable. The fortnight ended without a sign from his home; and torn to pieces by his anxieties, Holden returned to be swallowed up for two precious hours by a dinner at the club, wherein he heard, as a man hears in a swoon, voices telling him how execrably he had performed the other man's duties, and how he had endeared himself to all his associates. Then he fled on horseback through the night with his heart in his mouth. There was no answer at first to his blows on the gate; and he had just wheeled his horse round to kick it in, when Pir Khan appeared with a lantern and held his stirrup.

"Has aught occurred?" said Holden.

"The news does not come from my mouth, Protector of the Poor, but —" He held out his shaking hand, as befitted the bearer of good news who is entitled to a reward.

Holden hurried through the court-yard. A light burned in the upper room. His horse neighed in the gateway, and he heard a pin-pointed wail that sent all the blood into the apple of his throat. It was a new voice, but it did not prove that Ameera was alive.

"Who is there?" he called up the narrow brick staircase.

There was a cry of delight from Ameera, and then the voice of her mother, tremulous with old age and pride: "We be two women and — the — man — thy son."

On the threshold of the room Holden stepped on a naked dagger that was laid there to avert ill-luck, and it broke at the hilt under his impatient heel.

"God is great!" cooed Ameera in the half-light. "Thou hast taken his misfortunes on thy head."

"Ay, but how is it with thee, life of my life? Old woman, how is it with her?"

"She has forgotten her sufferings for joy that the child is born. There is no harm; but speak softly," said the mother.

"It only needed thy presence to make me all well," said Ameera. "My king, thou hast been very long away. What gifts hast thou for me? Ah! ah! It is I that bring gifts this time. Look, my life, look! Was there ever such a babe? Nay, I am too weak even to clear my arm from him."

"Rest, then, and do not talk. I am here, *bachheri*" [little woman].

"Well said; for there is a bond and a heel-rope [*peecharee*] between us now that nothing can break. Look — canst thou see in this light? He is without spot or blemish. Never was such a man-child. *Ya illah!* he shall be a pundit — no, a trooper of the Queen. And my life, dost thou love me as well as ever, though I am faint and sick and worn? Answer truly."

"Yea. I love as I have loved, with all my soul. Lie still, pearl, and rest."

"Then do not go. Sit by my side here — so. Mother, the lord of this house needs a cushion. Bring it." There was an almost imperceptible movement on the part of the new life that lay in the hollow of Ameera's arm. "Aho!" she said, her voice breaking with love. "The babe is a champion from his birth. He is kicking me in the side with mighty kicks. Was there ever such a babe? And he is ours to us — thine and mine. Put thy hand on his head; but carefully, for he is very young, and men are unskilled in such matters."

Very cautiously Holden touched with the tips of his fingers the downy head.

"He is of the Faith," said Ameera; "for, lying here in the night-watches, I whispered the Call to Prayer and the Profession of Faith into his ears. And it is most marvelous that he was born upon a Friday, as I was born. Be careful of him, my life; but he can almost grip with his hands."

Holden found one helpless little hand that closed feebly on his finger. And the clutch ran through his limbs till it settled about his heart. Till then his sole thought had been for Ameera. He began to realize that there was some one else in the world, but he could not feel that it was a veritable son with a soul. He sat down to think, and Ameera dozed lightly.

"Get hence, sahib," said her mother, under her breath. "It is not good that she should find you here on waking. She must be still."

"I go," said Holden submissively. "Here be rupees. See that my *baba* gets fat and finds all that he needs."

The chink of the silver roused Ameera. "I am his mother, and no hireling," she said weakly. "Shall I look to him more or less for the sake of money? Mother, give it back. I have borne my lord a son."

The deep sleep of weakness came upon her almost before the sentence was completed. Holden went down to the court-yard very softly, with his heart at ease. Pir Khan, the old watchman, was chuckling with delight.

"This house is now complete," he said; and without further comment thrust into Holden's hands the hilt of a sabre worn many years ago, when Pir Khan served the Queen in the police.

The bleat of a tethered goat came from the well-curb.

"There be two," said Pir Khan — "two goats of the best. I bought them, and they cost much money; and since there is no birth-party assembled, their flesh will be all mine. Strike craftily, sahib. 'Tis an ill-balanced sabre at the best. Wait till they raise their heads from cropping the marigolds."

"And why?" said Holden, bewildered.

"For the birth sacrifice. What else? Otherwise the child, being unguarded from fate, may die. The Protector of the Poor knows the fitting words to be said."

Holden had learned them once, with little thought that he would ever say them in earnest. The touch of the cold sabre hilt in his palm turned suddenly to the clinging grip of the child up-stairs,— the child that was his own son,— and a dread of loss filled him.

"Strike!" said Pir Khan. "Never life came into the world but life was paid for it. See, the goats have raised their heads. Now! With a drawing cut!"

Hardly knowing what he did, Holden cut twice as he muttered the Mohammedan prayer that runs, "Almighty! In place of this my son I offer life for life, blood for blood, head for head, bone for bone, hair for hair, skin for skin." The waiting horse snorted and bounded in his pickets at the smell of the raw blood that spurted over Holden's riding-boots.

"Well smitten!" said Pir Khan, wiping the sabre. "A swordsman was lost in thee. Go with a light heart, heaven-born. I am thy servant, and the servant of thy son. May the Presence live a thousand years, and—the flesh of the goats is all mine?"

Pir Khan drew back richer by a month's pay. Holden swung himself into the saddle, and rode off through the low-hanging wood smoke of the evening. He was full of riotous exultation, alternating with a vast vague tenderness directed towards no particular object, that made him choke as he bent over the neck of his uneasy horse. "I never felt like this in my life," he thought. "I'll go to the club and pull myself together."

A game of pool was beginning, and the room was full of men. Holden entered, eager to get to the light and the company of his fellows, singing at the top of his voice,—

"'In Baltimore a-walking, a lady I did meet.'"

"Did you?" said the club secretary from his corner. "Did she happen to tell you that your boots were wringing wet? Great goodness, man, it's blood!"

"Bosh!" said Holden, picking his cue from the rack. "May I cut in? It's dew. I've been riding through high crops. My faith! my boots are in a mess, though!

"'And if it be a girl, she shall wear a wedding-ring;
And if it be a boy, he shall fight for his king;
With his dirk, and his cap, and his little jacket blue,
He shall walk the quarter-deck—'"

"Yellow on blue—green next player," said the marker monotonously.

"'He shall walk the quarter-deck'—am I green, marker?—'He shall walk the quarter-deck'—ouch! that's a bad shot!—'as his daddy used to do!'"

"I don't see that you have anything to crow about," said a zealous junior civilian acidly. "The government is not exactly pleased with your work when you relieved Sanders."

"Does that mean a wigging from headquarters?" said Holden, with an abstracted smile. "I think I can stand it."

The talk beat up round the ever-fresh subject of each man's work, and steadied Holden till it was time to go to his dark, empty bungalow, where his butler received him as one who knew all his affairs. Holden remained awake for the greater part of the night, and his dreams were pleasant ones.

"How OLD is he now?"

"*Ya illah!* What a man's question! He is all-but six weeks old; and on this night I go up to the house-top with thee, my life, to count the stars. For that is auspicious. And he was born on a Friday, under the sign of the Sun, and it has been told to me that he will outlive us both and get wealth. Can we wish for aught better, beloved?"

"There is nothing better. Let us go up to the roof, and thou shalt count the stars — but a few only, for the sky is heavy with cloud."

"The winter rains are late, and maybe they come out of season. Come, before all the stars are hid. I have put on my richest jewels."

"Thou hast forgotten the best of all."

"Ai! *Ours.* He comes also. He has never yet seen the skies."

Ameera climbed the narrow staircase that led to the flat roof. The child, placid and unwinking, lay in the hollow of her right arm, gorgeous in silver-fringed muslin, with a small skull-cap on his head. Ameera wore all that she valued most: the diamond nose-stud that takes the place of the Western patch in drawing attention to the curve of the nostril, the gold ornament in the centre of the forehead studded with tallow-drop emeralds and flawed rubies, the heavy circlet of beaten gold that was fastened round her neck by the softness of the pure metal, and the chinking curb-patterned silver anklets hanging low over the rosy ankle-bone. She was dressed in jade-green muslin, as befitted a daughter of the Faith, and from shoulder to elbow and elbow to wrist ran bracelets of silver tied with floss silk; frail glass bangles slipped over the wrist in proof of the slenderness of the hand, — and certain heavy gold bracelets that had no part in her country's ornaments, but since they were Holden's gift, and fastened with a cunning European snap, delighted her immensely.

They sat down by the low white parapet of the roof, overlooking the city and its lights.

«They are happy down there,» said Ameera. «But I do not think that they are as happy as we. Nor do I think the white *mem-log* are as happy. And thou?»

«I know they are not.»

«How dost thou know?»

«They give their children over to the nurses.»

«I have never seen that,» said Ameera, with a sigh; «nor do I wish to see. Ahi!»—she dropped her head on Holden's shoulder—«I have counted forty stars, and I am tired. Look at the child, love of my life. He is counting too.»

The baby was staring with round eyes at the dark of the heavens. Ameera placed him in Holden's arms, and he lay there without a cry.

«What shall we call him among ourselves?» she said. «Look! Art thou ever tired of looking? He carries thy very eyes! But the mouth—»

«Is thine, most dear. Who should know better than I?»

«'Tis such a feeble mouth. Oh, so small! And yet it holds my heart between its lips. Give him to me now. He has been too long away.»

«Nay, let him lie: he has not yet begun to cry.»

«When he cries thou wilt give him back, eh? What a man of mankind thou art! If he cried he were only the dearer to me. But, my life, what little name shall we give him?»

The small body lay close to Holden's heart. It was utterly helpless and very soft. He scarcely dared to breathe for fear of crushing it. The caged green parrot, that is regarded as a sort of guardian spirit in most native households, moved on its perch and fluttered a drowsy wing.

«There is the answer,» said Holden. «Mian Mittu has spoken. He shall be the parrot. When he is ready he will talk mightily and run about. Mian Mittu is the parrot in thy—in the Mussulman tongue, is it not?»

«Why put me so far off?» said Ameera fretfully. «Let it be like unto some English name—but not wholly. For he is mine.»

«Then call him Tota, for that is likest English.»

«Ay, Tota! and that is still the parrot. Forgive me, my lord, for a minute ago; but in truth he is too little to wear all the weight of Mian Mittu for name. He shall be Tota—our Tota to us. Hearest thou, O small one? Littlest, thou art Tota.»

She touched the child's cheek, and he waking wailed, and it was necessary to return him to his mother, who soothed him with the wonderful rhyme of "*Aré koko, Ja ré koko!*" which says:—

"Oh, crow! Go, crow! Baby's sleeping sound,
And the wild plums grow in the jungle, only a penny a pound.
Only a penny a pound, *Baba*—only a penny a pound."

Reassured many times as to the price of those plums, Tota cuddled himself down to sleep. The two sleek white well-bullocks in the court-yard were steadily chewing the cud of their evening meal; old Pir Khan squatted at the head of Holden's horse, his police sabre across his knees, pulling drowsily at a big water-pipe that croaked like a bull-frog in a pond. Ameera's mother sat spinning in the lower veranda, and the wooden gate was shut and barred. The music of a marriage procession came to the roof above the gentle hum of the city, and a string of flying-foxes crossed the face of the low moon.

"I have prayed," said Ameera after a long pause, with her chin in her hand—"I have prayed two things. First, that I may die in thy stead, if thy death is demanded; and in the second, that I may die in the place of the child. I have prayed to the Prophet and to Beebee Miriam. Thinkest thou either will hear?"

"From thy lips who would not hear the lightest word?"

"I asked for straight talk, and thou hast given me sweet talk. Will my prayers be heard?"

"How can I say? God is very good."

"Of that I am not sure. Listen now. When I die or the child dies, what is thy fate? Living, thou wilt return to the bold white *mem-log*, for kind calls to kind."

"Not always."

"With a woman, no. With a man it is otherwise. Thou wilt in this life, later on, go back to thine own folk. That I could almost endure, for I should be dead. But in thy very death thou wilt be taken away to a strange place and a paradise that I do not know."

"Will it be paradise?"

"Surely; for what God would harm thee? But we two—I and the child—shall be elsewhere; and we cannot come to thee, nor canst thou come to us. In the old days, before the child was born, I did not think of these things; but now I think of them perpetually. It is very hard talk."

"It will fall as it will fall. To-morrow we do not know, but to-day and love we know well. Surely we are happy now."

"So happy that it were well to make our happiness assured. And thy Beebee Miriam should listen to me; for she is also a woman. But then she would envy me. It is not seemly for men to worship a woman."

Holden laughed aloud at Ameera's little spasm of jealousy.

"Is it not seemly? Why didst thou not turn me from worship of thee then?"

"Thou a worshiper! And of me! My king, for all thy sweet words, well I know that I am thy servant and thy slave, and the dust under thy feet. And I would not have it otherwise. See!"

Before Holden could prevent her she stooped forward and touched his feet; recovering herself with a little laugh, she hugged Tota closer to her bosom. Then, almost savagely:—

"Is it true that the bold white *mem-log* live for three times the length of my life? Is it true that they make their marriages not before they are old women?"

"They marry as do others—when they are women."

"That I know; but they wed when they are twenty-five. Is that true?"

"That is true."

"*Ya illah!* At twenty-five! Who would of his own will take a wife even of eighteen? She is a woman—aging every hour. Twenty-five! I shall be an old woman at that age, and—those *mem-log* remain young forever. How I hate them!"

"What have they to do with us?"

"I cannot tell. I know only that there may now be alive on this earth a woman ten years older than I, who may come to thee and take thy love ten years after I am an old woman, gray-headed, and the nurse of Tota's son. That is unjust and evil. They should die too."

"Now for all thy years thou art a child, and shalt be picked up and carried down the staircase."

"Tota! Have a care for Tota, my lord! Thou at least art as foolish as any babe!" Ameera tucked Tota out of harm's way in the hollow of her neck, and was carried down-stairs, laughing, in Holden's arms, while Tota opened his eyes and smiled after the manner of the lesser angels.

He was a silent infant; and almost before Holden could realize that he was in the world, developed into a small gold-colored godling, and unquestioned despot of the house overlooking the city. Those were months of absolute happiness to Holden and

Ameera,—happiness withdrawn from the world, shut in behind the wooden gate that Pir Khan guarded. By day Holden did his work, with an immense pity for such as were not so fortunate as himself, and a sympathy for small children that amazed and amused many mothers at the little station gatherings. At nightfall he returned to Ameera—Ameera full of the wondrous doings of Tota: how he had been seen to clap his hands together and move his fingers with intention and purpose, which was manifestly a miracle; how later he had of his own initiative crawled out of his low bedstead on to the floor, and swayed on both feet for the space of three breaths.

"And they were long breaths, for my heart stood still with delight," said Ameera.

Then he took the beasts into his councils,—the well-bullocks, the little gray squirrels, the mongoose that lived in a hole near the well, and especially Mian Mittu, the parrot, whose tail he grievously pulled, and Mian Mittu screamed till Ameera and Holden arrived.

"Oh, villain! Child of strength! This to thy brother on the house-top! *Tobah, tobah!* Fie! fie! But I know a charm to make him wise as Suleiman and Aflatoun. Now look," said Ameera. She drew from an embroidered bag a handful of almonds. "See! we count seven. In the name of God!"

She placed Mian Mittu, very angry and ruffled, on the top of his cage; and seating herself between the babe and the bird, cracked and peeled an almond less white than her teeth. "This is a true charm, my life: and do not laugh. See! I give the parrot one half, and Tota the other." Mian Mittu, with careful beak, took his share from between Ameera's lips, and she kissed the other half into the mouth of the child, who ate it slowly, with wondering eyes. "This I will do each day of seven, and without doubt he who is ours will be a bold speaker and wise. Eh, Tota, what wilt thou be when thou art a man and I am gray-headed?" Tota tucked his fat legs into adorable creases. He could crawl, but he was not going to waste the spring of his youth in idle speech. He wanted Mian Mittu's tail to tweak.

When he advanced to the dignity of a silver belt,—which, with a magic square engraved on silver and hung round his neck, made up the greater part of his clothing,—he staggered on a perilous journey down the garden to Pir Khan, and proffered him all his jewels in exchange for one little ride on Holden's horse.

He had seen his mother's mother chaffering with peddlers in the veranda. Pir Khan wept, set the untried feet on his own gray head in sign of fealty, and brought the bold adventurer to his mother's arms, vowing that Tota would be a leader of men ere his beard was grown.

One hot evening, while he sat on the roof between his father and mother, watching the never-ending warfare of the kites that the city boys flew, he demanded a kite of his own, with Pir Khan to fly it, because he had a fear of dealing with anything larger than himself; and when Holden called him a "spark," he rose to his feet and answered slowly, in defense of his new-found individuality: "*Hum 'park nahin hai. Hum admi hai*" (I am no spark, but a man).

The protest made Holden choke, and devote himself very seriously to a consideration of Tota's future.

He need hardly have taken the trouble. The delight of that life was too perfect to endure. Therefore it was taken away, as many things are taken away in India, suddenly and without warning. The little lord of the house, as Pir Khan called him, grew sorrowful and complained of pains, who had never known the meaning of pain. Ameera, wild with terror, watched him through the night, and in the dawning of the second day the life was shaken out of him by fever — the seasonal autumn fever. It seemed altogether impossible that he could die; and neither Ameera nor Holden at first believed the evidence of the body on the bedstead. Then Ameera beat her head against the wall, and would have flung herself down the well in the garden, had Holden not restrained her by main force.

One mercy only was granted to Holden. He rode to his office in broad daylight, and found waiting him an unusually heavy mail that demanded concentrated attention and hard work. He was not, however, alive to this kindness of the gods.

THE first shock of a bullet is no more than a brisk pinch. The wrecked body does not send in its protest to the soul till ten or fifteen seconds later. Then comes thirst, throbbing and agony, and a ridiculous amount of screaming. Holden realized his pain slowly, exactly as he had realized his happiness; and with the same imperious necessity for hiding all trace of it. In the beginning he only felt that there had been a loss, and that

Ameera needed comforting where she sat with her head on her knees, shivering, as Mian Mittu from the house-top called « Tota! Tota! Tota! » Later all his world and the daily life of it rose up to hurt him. It was an outrage that any one of the children at the band-stand in the evening should be alive and clamorous when his own child lay dead. It was more than mere pain when one of them touched him; and stories told by over-fond fathers of their children's latest performances cut him to the quick. He could not declare his pain. He had neither help, comfort, nor sympathy; and Ameera, at the end of each weary day, would lead him through the hell of self-questioning reproach which is reserved for those who have lost a child, and believe that with a little — just a little more care — it might have been saved. There are not many hells worse than this; but he knows one who has sat down temperately to consider whether he is or is not responsible for the death of his wife.

« Perhaps, » Ameera would say, « I did not take sufficient heed. Did I, or did I not? The sun on the roof that day when he played so long alone, and I was — *ahi!* braiding my hair — it may be that the sun then bred the fever. If I had warned him from the sun he might have lived. But oh, my life, say that I am guiltless! Thou knowest that I loved him as I love thee! Say that there is no blame on me, or I shall die — I shall die! »

« There is no blame. Before God, none. It was written, and how could we do aught to save? What has been, has been. Let it go, beloved. »

« He was all my heart to me. How can I let the thought go when my arm tells me every night that he is not here? *Ahi! ahi!* O Tota, come back to me — come back again, and let us be all together as it was before! »

« Peace! peace! For thine own sake, and for mine also, if thou lovest me, rest. »

« By this I know thou dost not care; and how shouldst thou? The white men have hearts of stone and souls of iron. Oh that I had married a man of mine own people — though he beat me — and had never eaten the bread of an alien! »

« Am I an alien, mother of my son? »

« What else, sahib? — Oh, forgive me — forgive! The death has driven me mad. Thou art the life of my heart, and the light of my eyes, and the breath of my life, and — and I have put thee from me, though it was but for a moment. If thou goest away, to whom shall I look for help? Do not be angry. Indeed, it was the pain that spoke, and not thy slave."

"I know — I know. We be two who were three. The greater need therefore that we should be one."

They were sitting on the roof as of custom. The night was a warm one in early spring, and sheet-lightning was dancing on the horizon to a broken tune played by far-off thunder. Ameera settled herself in Holden's arms.

"The dry earth is lowing like a cow for the rain, and I — I am afraid. It was not like this when we counted the stars. But thou lovest me as much as before, though a bond is taken away? Answer."

"I love more, because a new bond has come out of the sorrow that we have eaten together; and that thou knowest."

"Yea, I know," said Ameera, in a very small whisper. "But it is good to hear thee say so, my life, who art so strong to help. I will be a child no more, but a woman and an aid to thee. Listen. Give me my *sitar*, and I will sing bravely."

She took the light silver-studded *sitar*, and began a song of the great hero Rajá Rasalu. The hand failed on the strings; the tune halted, checked, and at a low note turned off to the poor little nursery rhyme about the wicked crow: —

"'And the wild plums grow in the jungle —
Only a penny a pound;
Only a penny a pound, *Baba* — only —'"

Then came the tears and the piteous rebellion against fate, till she slept, moaning a little in her sleep, with the right arm thrown clear of the body, as though it protected something that was not there.

It was after this night that life became a little easier for Holden. The ever-present pain of loss drove him into his work; and the work repaid him by filling up his mind for eight or nine hours a day. Ameera sat alone in the house and brooded; but grew happier when she understood that Holden was more at ease — according to the custom of women. They touched happiness again, but this time with caution.

"It was because we loved Tota that he died. The jealousy of God was upon us," said Ameera. "I have hung up a large black jar before our window to turn the Evil Eye from us, and we must make no protestations of delight, but go softly underneath the stars, lest God find us out. Is that not good talk, worthless one?»

She had shifted the accent of the word that means «beloved,» in proof of the sincerity of her purpose. But the kiss that followed the new christening was a thing that any deity might have envied. They went about henceforward saying, «It is naught — it is naught,» and hoping that all the Powers heard.

The Powers were busy on other things. They had allowed thirty million people four years of plenty, wherein men fed well and the crops were certain, and the birth-rate rose year by year; the districts reported a purely agricultural population varying from nine hundred to two thousand to the square mile of the overburdened earth. It was time to make room. And the Member for Lower Tooting, wandering about India in top-hat and frock-coat, talked largely of the benefits of British rule, and suggested as the one thing needful the establishment of a duly qualified electoral system, and a general bestowal of the franchise. His long-suffering hosts smiled and made him welcome; and when he paused to admire, with pretty picked words, the blossom of the blood-red dhak-tree, that had flowered untimely for a sign of the sickness that was coming, they smiled more than ever.

It was the Deputy Commissioner of Kot-Kumharsen, staying at the club for a day, who lightly told a tale that made Holden's blood run cold as he overheard the end.

«He won't bother any one any more. Never saw a man so astonished in my life. By Jove! I thought he meant to ask a question in the House about it. Fellow-passenger in his ship — dined next him — bowled over by cholera, and died in eighteen hours. You needn't laugh, you fellows. The Member for Lower Tooting is awfully angry about it; but he's more scared. I think he's going to take his enlightened self out of India.»

«I'd give a good deal if he were knocked over. It might keep a few vestrymen of his kidney to their parish. But what's this about cholera? It's full early for anything of that kind,» said a warden of an unprofitable salt-lick.

«Dun'no',» said the Deputy Commissioner, reflectively. «We've got locusts with us. There's sporadic cholera all along the north — at least, we're calling it sporadic for decency's sake. The spring crops are short in five districts, and nobody seems to know where the winter rains are. It's nearly March now. I don't want to scare anybody, but it seems to me that Nature's going to audit her accounts with a big red pencil this summer."

"Just when I wanted to take leave, too," said a voice across the room.

"There won't be much leave this year; but there ought to be a great deal of promotion. I've come in to persuade the government to put my pet canal on the list of famine-relief works. It's an ill wind that blows no good. I shall get that canal finished at last."

"Is it the old programme, then," said Holden,—"famine, fever, and cholera?"

"Oh no! Only local scarcity and an unusual prevalence of seasonal sickness. You'll find it all in the reports if you live till next year. You're a lucky chap. You haven't got a wife to put out of harm's way. The hill stations ought to be full of women this year."

"I think you're inclined to exaggerate the talk in the *bazars*," said a young civilian in the secretariat. "Now I have observed—"

"I daresay you have," said the Deputy Commissioner, "but you've a great deal more to observe, my son. In the mean time I wish to observe to you—" And he drew him aside to discuss the construction of the canal that was so dear to his heart.

Holden went to his bungalow, and began to understand that he was not alone in the world; and also that he was afraid for the sake of another, which is the most soul-satisfying fear known to man.

Two months later, as the Deputy had foretold, Nature began to audit her accounts with a red pencil. On the heels of the spring reapings came a cry for bread, and the Government, which had decreed that no man should die of want, sent wheat. Then came the cholera from all four quarters of the compass. It struck a pilgrim gathering of half a million at a sacred shrine. Many died at the feet of their god; the others broke, and ran over the face of the land, carrying the pestilence with them. It smote a walled city, and killed two hundred a day. The people crowded the trains, hanging on to the foot-boards and squatting on the roofs of the carriages; and the cholera followed them, for at each station they dragged out the dead and the dying on the platforms reeking of lime-wash and carbolic acid. They died by the roadside, and the horses of the Englishmen shied at the corpses in the grass. The rains did not come, and the earth turned to iron lest man should escape by hiding in her. The English sent their wives away to the Hills, and went about their work; coming forward as they were bidden to fill the gaps in the fighting line. Holden, sick with fear of losing his chiefest treasure on earth, had done his best to persuade Ameera to go away with her mother to the Himalayas.

"Why should I go?" said she one evening on the roof.

"There is sickness, and the people are dying, and all the white *mem-log* have gone."

"All of them?"

"All—unless perhaps there remain some old scald-head who vexes her husband's heart by running risk of death."

"Nay: who stays is my sister, and thou must not abuse her, for I will be a scald-head too. I am glad all the bold white *mem-log* are gone."

"Do I speak to a woman or a babe? Go to the Hills, and I will see to it that thou goest like a queen's daughter. Think, child. In a red-lacquered bullock-cart, veiled and curtained, with brass peacocks upon the pole and red-cloth hangings. I will send two orderlies for guard, and—"

"Peace! Thou art the babe in speaking thus. What use are those toys to me? *He* would have patted the bullocks and played with the housings. For his sake, perhaps—thou hast made me very English—I might have gone. Now I will not. Let the *mem-log* run."

"Their husbands are sending them, beloved."

"Very good talk. Since when hast thou been my husband to tell me what to do? I have but borne thee a son. Thou art only all the desire of my soul to me. How shall I depart when I know that if evil befall thee by the breadth of so much as my littlest finger-nail—is not that small?—I should be aware of it though I were in Paradise. And here, this summer thou mayst die—ai, janee, die!—and in dying they might call to tend thee a white woman, and she would rob me in the last of thy love."

"But love is not born in a moment, or on a death-bed."

"What dost thou know of love, stone-heart? She would take thy thanks at least; and by God and the Prophet, and Beebee Miriam the mother of thy Prophet, that I will never endure.

My lord and my love, let there be no more foolish talk of going away. Where thou art, I am. It is enough." She put an arm round his neck and a hand on his mouth.

There are not many happinesses so complete as those that are snatched under the shadow of the sword. They sat together and laughed, calling each other openly by every pet name that could move the wrath of the gods. The city below them was locked up in its own torments. Sulphur-fires blazed in the streets; the conches in the Hindu temples screamed and bellowed, for the gods were inattentive in those days. There was a service in the great Mohammedan shrine, and the call to prayer from the minarets was almost unceasing. They heard the wailing in the houses of the dead, and once the shriek of a mother who had lost a child and was calling for its return. In the gray dawn they saw the dead borne out through the city gates, each litter with its own little knot of mourners. Wherefore they kissed each other and shivered.

It was a red and heavy audit; for the land was very sick, and needed a little breathing-space ere the torrent of cheap life should flood it anew. The children of immature fathers and undeveloped mothers made no resistance. They were cowed and sat still; waiting till the sword should be sheathed in November, if it were so willed. There were gaps among the English, but the gaps were filled. The work of superintending famine relief, cholera sheds, medicine distribution, and what little sanitation was possible, went forward because it was so ordered.

Holden had been told to hold himself in readiness to move to replace the next man who should fall. There were twelve hours in each day when he could not see Ameera; and she might die in three. He was considering what his pain would be if he could not see her for three months, or if she died out of his sight. He was absolutely certain that her death would be demanded: so certain that when he looked up from the telegram and saw Pir Khan breathless in the doorway, he laughed aloud. "And—?" said he.

"When there is a cry in the night and the spirit flutters into the throat, who has a charm that will restore? Come swiftly, heaven-born. It is the Black Cholera."

Holden galloped to his home. The sky was heavy with clouds, for the long-deferred rains were at hand, and the heat was stifling. Ameera's mother met him in the court-yard, whimpering, "She is dying. She is nursing herself into death. She is all but dead. What shall I do, sahib?"

Ameera was lying in the room in which Tota had been born. She made no sign when Holden entered; because the human soul is a very lonely thing, and when it is getting ready to go away, hides itself in a misty borderland where the living may not follow. The Black Cholera does its work quietly and without explanation. Ameera was being thrust out of life as though the Angel of Death had himself put his hand upon her. The quick breathing seemed to show that she was either afraid or in pain, but neither eyes nor mouth gave any answer to Holden's kisses. There was nothing to be said or done. Holden could only wait and suffer. The first drops of the rain began to fall on the roof, and he could hear shouts of joy in the parched city.

The soul came back a little, and the lips moved. Holden bent down to listen. "Keep nothing of mine," said Ameera. "Take no hair from my head. *She* would make thee burn it later on. That flame I should feel. Lower! Stoop lower! Remember only that I was thine and bore thee a son. Though thou wed a white woman to-morrow, the pleasure of taking in thy arms thy first son is taken from thee forever. Remember me when thy son is born — the one that shall carry thy name before all men. His misfortunes be on my head. I bear witness — I bear witness" — the lips were forming the words on his ear — "that there is no God but — thee, beloved."

Then she died. Holden sat still, and thought of any kind was taken from him till he heard Ameera's mother lift the curtain.

"Is she dead, sahib?"

"She is dead."

"Then I will mourn, and afterwards take an inventory of the furniture in this house; for that will be mine. The sahib does not mean to resume it? It is so little, so very little, sahib, and I am an old woman. I would like to lie softly."

"For the mercy of God, be silent awhile! Go out and mourn where I cannot hear."

"Sahib, she will be buried in four hours."

"I know the custom. I shall go ere she is taken away. That matter is in thy hands. Look to it that the bed — on which — on which — she lies —"

«Aha! That beautiful red-lacquered bed. I have long desired —»

«— That the bed is left here untouched for my disposal. All else in the house is thine. Hire a cart, take everything, go hence; and before sunrise let there be nothing in this house but that which I have ordered thee to respect.»

«I am an old woman. I would stay at least for the days of mourning, and the rains have just broken. Whither shall I go?»

«What is that to me? My order is that there is a going. The house-gear is worth a thousand rupees, and my orderly shall bring thee a hundred rupees to-night.»

«That is very little. Think of the cart-hire.»

«It shall be nothing unless thou goest, and with speed. O woman, get hence, and leave me to my dead!»

The mother shuffled down the staircase; and in her anxiety to take stock of the house-fittings forgot to mourn. Holden stayed by Ameera's side, and the rain roared on the roof. He could not think connectedly by reason of the noise, though he made many attempts to do so. Then four sheeted ghosts glided dripping into the room and stared at him through their veils. They were the washers of the dead. Holden left the room, and went out to his horse. He had come in a dead, stifling calm, through ankle-deep dust. He found the court-yard a rain-lashed pond alive with frogs; a torrent of yellow water ran under the gate, and a roaring wind drove the bolts of the rain like buckshot against the mud walls. Pir Khan was shivering in his little hut by the gate, and the horse was stamping uneasily in the water.

«I have been told the sahib's order,» said he. «It is well. This house is now desolate. I go also, for my monkey face would be a reminder of that which has been. Concerning the bed, I will bring that to thy house yonder in the morning. But remember, sahib, it will be to thee as a knife turned in a green wound. I go upon a pilgrimage, and I will take no money. I have grown fat in the protection of the Presence, whose sorrow is my sorrow. For the last time I hold his stirrup.»

He touched Holden's foot with both hands, and the horse sprang out into the road, where the creaking bamboos were whipping the sky and all the frogs were chuckling. Holden could not see for the rain in his face. He put his hands before his eyes and muttered, «Oh, you brute! You utter brute!»

The news of his trouble was already in his bungalow. He read the knowledge in his butler's eyes when Ahmed Khan brought in food, and for the first and last time in his life laid a hand upon his master's shoulder, saying, "Eat, sahib, eat. Meat is good against sorrow. I also have known. Moreover, the shadows come and go, sahib. The shadows come and go. These be curried eggs."

Holden could neither eat nor sleep. The heavens sent down eight inches of rain in that night and scoured the earth clean. The waters tore down walls, broke roads, and washed open the shallow graves in the Mohammedan burying-ground. All next day it rained, and Holden sat still in his house considering his sorrow. On the morning of the third day he received a telegram which said only—"Ricketts, Myndonie. Dying. Holden relieve. Immediate." Then he thought that before he departed he would look at the house wherein he had been master and lord. There was a break in the weather. The rank earth steamed with vapor, and Holden was vermilion from head to heel with the prickly-heat born of sultry moisture.

He found that the rains had torn down the mud pillars of the gateway, and the heavy wooden gate that had guarded his life hung drunkenly from one hinge. There was grass three inches high in the court-yard; Pir Khan's lodge was empty and the sodden thatch sagged between the beams. A gray squirrel was in possession of the veranda, as if the house had been untenanted for thirty years instead of three days. Ameera's mother had removed everything except some mildewed matting. The *tick-tick* of the little scorpions as they hurried across the floor was the only sound in the house. Ameera's room and that other one where Tota had lived were heavy with mildew; and the narrow staircase leading to the roof was streaked and stained with rain-borne mud. Holden saw all these things, and came out again; to meet in the road Durga Dass, his landlord,—portly, affable, clothed in white muslin, and driving a C-spring buggy. He was overlooking his property, to see how the roofs withstood the stress of the first rains.

"I have heard," said he, "you will not take this place any more, sahib?"

"What are you going to do with it?"

"Perhaps I shall let it again."

«Then I will keep it on while I am away.»

Durga Dass was silent for some time. «You shall not take it on, sahib,» he said. «When I was a young man I also— But to-day I am a member of the Municipality. Ho! ho! No. When the birds have gone, what need to keep the nest? I will have it pulled down: the timber will sell for something always. It shall be pulled down, and the Municipality shall make a road across, as they desire, from the burning-ghat to the city wall. So that no man may say where this house stood.»

«FUZZY WUZZY»

(SOUDAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)

WE'VE fought with many men acrost the seas,
An' some of 'em was brave an' some was not:
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.
We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im:
'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our 'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Sua*kim*,
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our forces.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class fightin' man;
We gives you your certifikit, an' if you want it signed
We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you whenever you're inclined.

We took our chanst among the Kyber 'ills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile;
The Burman guv us Irrewaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style:
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us swaller;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us 'oller.
Then 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the missis and the kid;
Our orders was to break you, an' of course we went an' did.

We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it wasn't 'ardly fair;
But for all the odds agin you, Fuzzy-Wuz, you bruk the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own,
'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,
So we must certify the skill 'e's shown
In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords:
When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
With 'is coffin-'eaded shield an' shovel-spear,
A 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
Will last a 'ealthy Tommy for a year.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your friends which is no more;
If we 'adn't lost some messmates we would 'elp you to deplore:
But give an' take's the gospel, an' we'll call the bargain fair,—
For if you 'ave lost more than us, you crumpled up the square!

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ead;
'E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.
'E's a daisy, 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb!
'E's a injia-rubber idiot on the spree;
'E's the on'y thing that doesn't care a damn
For a Regiment o' British Infantree!
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class fightin' man;
An' 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your 'ayrick 'ead of 'air—
You big black boundin' beggar—for you bruk a British square!

DANNY DEEVER

« What are the bugles blowin' for?» said Files-on-Parade.
« To turn you out, to turn you out,» the Color-Sergeant said.
« What makes you look so white, so white?» said Files-on-Parade.
« I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch,» the Color-Sergeant said.
For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can 'ear the Dead March play,
The regiment's in 'ollow square — they're hangin' him to-day;
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

« What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard?» said Files-on-Parade.
« It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold,» the Color-Sergeant said.
« What makes that front-rank man fall down?» says Files-on-Parade.
«A touch of sun, a touch of sun,» the Color-Sergeant said.
They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are marchin' of 'im round.
They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the ground;
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin' shootin' hound —
Oh, they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

« 'Is cot was right-'and cot to mine,» said Files-on-Parade.
« 'E's sleepin' out an' far to-night,» the Color-Sergeant said.
« I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times,» said Files-on-Parade.
« 'E's drinkin' bitter beer alone,» the Color-Sergeant said.
They are hangin' Danny Deever, you must mark 'im to 'is place,
For 'e shot a comrade sleepin' — you must look 'im in the face;
Nine 'undred of 'is county an' the regiment's disgrace,
While they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

« What's that so black agin the sun?» said Files-on-Parade.
« It's Danny fightin' 'ard for life,» the Color-Sergeant said.
« What's that that whimpers over'ead?» said Files-on-Parade.
« It's Danny's soul that's passin' now,» the Color-Sergeant said.
For they're done with Danny Deever, you can 'ear the quick-step play;
The regiment's in column, an' they're marchin' us away;
Ho! the young recruits are shakin', an' they'll want their beer to-day,
After hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

MANDALAY

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', an' I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells they say,—
«Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!»
Come you back to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?
Oh, the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay

'Er petticut was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat—jes' the same as Theebaw's Queen;
An' I seed her fust a-smokin' of a whackin' white cheroot,
An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on a 'eathen idol's foot:
Bloomin' idol made o' mud—
Wot they called the Great Gawd Budd—
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er where she stud!
On the road to Mandalay—(etc.)

When the mist was on the rice-fields an' the sun was droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing «*Kulla-lo-lo!*»
With 'er arm upon my shoulder an' her cheek agin my cheek
We useter watch the steamers an' the *hathis* pilin' teak.
Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy, squdgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid to speak!
On the road to Mandalay—(etc.)

But that's all shove be'ind me—long ago an' fur away,
An' there ain't no 'busses runnin' from the Bank to Mandalay;
An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year sodger tells:
«If you've 'eard the East a-callin', you won't never 'eed naught else.»
No! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells
An' the sunshine an' the palm-trees an' the tinkly temple-bells!
On the road to Mandalay—(etc.)

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gritty pavin'-stones,
An' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones;
Though I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,
An' they talks a lot o' lovin'—but wot do they understand?

Beefy face an' grubby 'and—
Law! wot do they understand?
I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner, greener land!
On the road to Mandalay—(etc.)

Ship me somewheres east of Suez, where the best is like the worst,
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments an' a man can raise a thirst;
For the temple-bells are callin', an' it's there that I would be—
By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' lazy at the sea—
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnings when we went to Mandalay!
Oh, the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

THE GALLEY-SLAVE

Oh, gallant was our galley, from her carven steering-wheel
To her figure-head of silver and her beak of hammered steel;
The leg-bar chafed the ankle, and we gasped for cooler air,
But no galley on the water with our galley could compare!

Our bulkheads bulged with cotton and our masts were stepped in gold,
We ran a mighty merchandise of niggers in the hold;
The white foam spun behind us, and the black shark swam below,
As we gripped the kicking sweep-head and we made that galley go.

It was merry in the galley, for we reveled now and then—
If they wore us down like cattle, faith, we fought and loved like men!
As we snatched her through the water, so we snatched a minute's bliss,
And the mutter of the dying never spoiled the lovers' kiss.

Our women and our children toiled beside us in the dark;
They died, we filed their fetters, and we heaved them to the shark—
We heaved them to the fishes; but so fast the galley sped,
We had only time to envy, for we could not mourn, our dead.

Bear witness, once my comrades, what a hard-bit gang were we—
The servants of the sweep-head, but the masters of the sea!

By the hands that drove her forward as she plunged and yawed and sheered,
Woman, Man, or God or Devil, was there anything we feared?

Was it storm? Our fathers faced it, and a wilder never blew;
Earth that waited for the wreckage watched the galley struggle through.
Burning noon or choking midnight, Sickness, Sorrow, Parting, Death?
Nay, our very babes would mock you, had they time for idle breath.

But to-day I leave the galley, and another takes my place;
There's my name upon the deck-beam — let it stand a little space.
I am free — to watch my messmates beating out to open main,
Free of all that Life can offer — save to handle sweep again.

By the brand upon my shoulder, by the gall of clinging steel,
By the welt the whips have left me, by the scars that never heal;
By eyes grown old with staring through the sun-wash on the brine,
I am paid in full for service — would that service still were mine!

Yet they talk of times and seasons and of woe the years bring forth,
Of our galley swamped and shattered in the rollers of the North.
When the niggers break the hatches, and the decks are gay with gore,
And a craven-hearted pilot crams her crashing on the shore,

She will need no half-mast signal, minute-gun, or rocket-flare;
When the cry for help goes seaward, she will find her servants there.
Battered chain-gangs of the orlop, grizzled drafts of years gone by,
To the bench that broke their manhood, they shall lash themselves and die.

Hale and crippled, young and aged, paid, deserted, shipped away —
Palace, cot, and lazaretto shall make up the tale that day,
When the skies are black above them, and the decks ablaze beneath,
And the top-men clear the raffle with their clasp-knives in their teeth.

It may be that Fate will give me life and leave to row once more —
Set some strong man free for fighting as I take awhile his oar.
But to-day I leave the galley. Shall I curse her service, then?
God be thanked — whate'er comes after, I have lived and toiled with Men!

HEINRICH VON KLEIST

(1777–1811)

BY CHARLES HARVEY GENUNG

Heinrich von Kleist is a tragic figure; an unhappy man born in an unhappy time. Endowed with supreme poetic powers which in a more fortunate age might have made him chief among the poets of Germany, he stood beneath the overmastering shadow of Shakespeare; he was hampered by the dominating genius of Goethe and Schiller; he was embittered by the neglect of his contemporaries, and finally was crushed by the ignominy of national disaster and disgrace. Born of a noble family, Kleist fell heir to all the inconveniences of rank; he was poor, but precluded by birth from any except a military or an official career. At strife with himself, richly gifted for one calling but obliged to adopt another, he consumed the energy of his younger years in an endeavor to attain a clear intellectual vision. It was the same struggle that took Alfieri's youthful strength, and caused Byron to bid farewell to his native land. But when at last Kleist had almost worked out his spiritual problem and had discovered the true sources of his strength, his country's liberties were crushed at Jena. «More deeply than most of his contemporaries,» says Kuno Francke, «did Kleist feel the agony of an age which saw the creation of centuries sink into dust.» And national dishonor followed close upon military defeat. Although the distant mutterings were already audible of the storm which was to sweep the French from German soil, Kleist was destined never to see the glorious outcome of that struggle. Hopeless but resigned, he fell by his own hand before the national uprising had taken shape. In less than two years after his death, the ultimate triumph of Germany had become assured by the victory at Leipsic. It was on the anniversary of Kleist's birthday that the battle was won. He would have been thirty-six years old.

Heinrich von Kleist

The story of Kleist's life may be briefly told. He was born on October 18th, 1777, at Frankfort-on-the-Oder. An orphan at eleven, he was educated by a clergyman in Berlin, and at the age of sixteen entered the guards and served in the Rhine campaign. When he left the army he took up the study of law, and obtained a position in the civil service which he lost after the battle of Jena. It was then that his genius was developed, and the next five years were those of his greatest productivity; but meanwhile an ignominious peace destroyed all his hopes for Germany. The despair of the poet without an audience, and of the patriot without a country, brought him to his last act. With Henriette Vogel, the high-strung wife of a Berlin merchant, he went to Potsdam; and in accordance with their romantic agreement, on November 21st, 1811, he shot first her and then himself. A simple stone marks the spot where the greatest of Prussian poets lies buried.

The works which Kleist has left behind are of the highest importance in German literature. His dramas hold the stage to-day beside those of Goethe, of Schiller, and of Lessing. The characters he has created have become indispensable members of that immortal company which peoples the imagination of the German race. Potentially he was the greatest dramatist that Germany has produced. Although he grew up among the extravagances of the Romantic school, Kleist was a realist. He had indeed sought in the realms of fancy, relief from the oppressive reality, and so it is that upon his most realistic pictures there falls a ray of weird light from dreamland; but as in all great works of art, realistic treatment is combined with ideal thought, so in Kleist. Each figure, each event, embodied itself before him in its actual material form; and what he saw he was able to draw with a firm and sure hand. His characters move with heavy tread; they are robust living creatures: but they pursue high aims, are moved by noble impulses, and are significant of lofty thoughts that can find expression only in symbols. If they are sometimes lightly clad in romantic garb, these garments are but transparent robes from the Erlking's chest, which only heighten the convincing reality of the figures they enwrap. Kleist's power of plastic presentation was not surpassed by either Goethe or Schiller. He painted «the thing as he saw it, for the God of things as they are.»

Fate was the dominant note in Kleist's philosophy. The strands of his destiny were woven by the Norns, and no effort of the will could break the rope by which they had bound him. In all his works this inevitable succession of events reappears. It is fate not as a force from without but as a power from within, placed there at birth, relentless, from which there is no ultimate escape; even the struggle against it is only a part of the predestined plan, foredoomed to defeat. So Kleist struggled; so his characters struggle, but with this difference: these win a spiritual triumph, none ends as he ended.

The poet saw the way, but the Prussian nobleman could not follow The characters in his dramas are involved without fault of their own in their tragic situations. In 'Das Käthchen von Heilbronn' (Kitty of Heilbronn) it is love, represented as an irresistible possession of the soul, that takes the form of fate. Not cruelty nor insult can shake Käthchen in her childlike devotion. So in the wonderland of 'Penthesilea,' in which the whole genius of Kleist is revealed, the heroine is relentlessly impelled to kill the man she loves, for the queen of the Amazons may not know love; then, by no act of violence but by a supreme effort of the will, she joins her lover in death. In the 'Prince of Homburg' fate takes the form of military discipline and obedience. The prince secures his spiritual triumph by recognizing at last the justice of the death sentence, and by urging its execution. It was the failure of this play to obtain a hearing that put the last bitter drop into the poet's cup of sorrow. This and the 'Hermannsschlacht' (Hermann's Battle) were not published until after Kleist's death, and they are his greatest works. The 'Battle of Hermann' is the embodiment of exuberant joy at the thought that now all other considerations may be laid aside, and that pitiless vengeance may at last be exacted. Kleist firmly believed in the ultimate overthrow of French domination, and he symbolized his belief in the splendid figure of the old Teutonic hero who threw off the Roman yoke. This is the most joyous note that Kleist ever struck. In all else the tragedy of his own life threw its shadow upon his work. Nothing in his external circumstances served to assist him in the attainment of his true ambition. Only one of his plays ever received so much as a respectful hearing during his lifetime; and for fifty years he lay in a forgotten grave.

One comedy appears in the brief list of Kleist's works: 'Der Zerbrochene Krug' (The Broken Jug). It is the most compact and effective one-act comedy in German literature. This vivid picture of a village judge sitting in judgment upon a crime which he has himself committed has been likened to a Dutch *genre* piece; its popularity is undiminished to-day. In prose narration also Kleist showed himself a supreme master; and his masterpiece is 'Michael Kohlhaas,' a tale of popular rebellion in the sixteenth century. It moves before the reader with the stern vividness of actual event. Kohlhaas's keen sense of justice, at first a virtue and guaranty of good citizenship, makes him at last a rebel and a scourge. It is a story of the most substantial realism; but this ordinary horse-dealer is at heart an idealist, carrying within him the picture of an impossible world in which absolute justice reigns. His acts are the inevitable outgrowth of this ideal. The tale is told with thrilling simplicity, objectivity, and strength; there are no superfluous trappings of historical romance; the characters triumph by their own force.

Slowly Kleist has won the place which he is destined to occupy in German literature, and to which the aged Wieland long ago assigned him,—beside Goethe whom he revered and Schiller from whom he revolted. As in the case of Byron, the imagination cannot refrain from the futile inquiry: What might he not have achieved, had he lived past the crisis? With the dawn of a happier time, Kleist's genius might, so far at least as the drama is concerned, have made good his audacious boast that he would one day tear the laurels from Goethe's brow.

Chas. H. Genung

MICHAEL KOHLHAAS

Translated by Francis Lloyd and William Newton

About the middle of the sixteenth century there lived on the banks of the Havel a horse-dealer named Michael Kohlhaas. He was the son of a schoolmaster, and was distinguished as at once the most right-feeling and most terrible man of his time. Up to his thirtieth year, he might have been selected as the model of a perfect citizen. In the village in which he dwelt, and which still bears his name, he possessed a farm, from the produce of which, together with his business, he derived a tranquil subsistence; he had several children, whom he brought up in the fear of God and the love of diligence and truth; and there was not one among his neighbors who was not witness either to his generosity or to his unswerving sense of justice. In a word, had he not carried to excess one virtue, posterity would have blessed his memory. Unluckily, however, his love of justice made him a robber and a murderer.

One day he started from home with a drove of young horses, all in high condition, with which he hoped to do great things at the fair he was about to visit; he rode on, thinking what use he would make of his gains, both in future investments and in little additions to the pleasures of the moment, and was lost in thought as he came to that part of the road which runs parallel with the Elbe: when just beneath a noble Saxon castle, his horse shied at a turnpike which in his previous journeys he had never encountered. He pulled up amid the pouring rain, and called the pikeman, who soon presented his sulky visage at the window; the horse-dealer desired him to open.

« Where on earth has this rained from? » he asked, as the man made his appearance after a leisurely delay.

« It is a royal patent, » the man replied as he opened the gate, « lately granted to my Lord Wenzel von Tronka. »

« Indeed, » said Kohlhaas: « is Wenzel the name? » and with that he gazed at the castle, whose glistening towers commanded the plain.

« What! is the old lord dead? » he asked.

« Dead of apoplexy, » the pikeman answered, as he threw wide the gate.

« Well, well, it's a bad job, » Kohlhaas replied: « he was a fine old fellow — a man that loved to see business, and lent a helping hand where it was needed. I remember he had a stone causeway built outside the village, because a mare of mine slipped there once and broke her leg.— Well, what's to pay? » he inquired, as he extracted the pence the old man demanded, from beneath his storm-tossed mantle. « Ay, old man, » he added, as he caught an exhortation to haste, 'mid curses against the weather, « if the wood that gate is made of were still growing in the forest, it would be better for both you and me. » And therewith he handed him the money, and essayed to proceed on his journey. He had but just passed the gate, when a loud cry of « Hold hard there, you horse-dealer! » came ringing from the tower; turning, he saw the castellan hastily close a window and hurry down the decline.

« Well, what's up now? » thought Kohlhaas, checking his cavalcade; the steward did not leave him long in doubt, but buttoning his vest over his ample person and thrusting his head cornerwise against the wind, he inquired for his passport.

« Passport? » repeated Kohlhaas; as far as he knew he had no idea that he had one, but if he would have the kindness to tell him what on earth it was, he might perchance be provided with it.

The castellan eyed him askance, and gruffly replied that without a government passport no horse-dealer could carry his cattle over the frontier.

Kohlhaas assured him that he had already crossed the frontier seventeen times without a line of writing by him, and that he had taken the trouble to study every by-law that concerned his business; further, that he was persuaded that there must be some mistake. Then, with a polite gesture, he begged the man to bethink himself, as he had a long day's journey before him and did not wish to be frivolously delayed. The castellan grinned, and said that if he had got through seventeen times he would not find it so easy the eighteenth; adding, with a certain irony, that the order had been issued to fit just this case. To further questioning, he answered that he must either buy the passport on the spot or go where he came from. The horse-dealer, who began to be angry about these illegal exactions, after a little reflection dismounted, saying that he would himself have a talk with my Lord of Tronka about the matter. He then betook himself to the castle, whither the castellan followed him, mumbling about skinflints and the good it did them to lighten their purses; and they both entered the hall, each measuring the other with angry glances.

It happened that my lord was feasting with sundry pleasant friends, and that a roar of laughter, starting at the bidding of some joke, met Kohlhaas as he pressed forward to prefer his complaint. My lord leaned back and asked him what he wanted, and the knights when they caught sight of the stranger held their peace; but he had hardly got out a word or two of his business when the whole gang shouted, « Horses! where are they? » And without further ado, they rose from their seats and ran to the windows to see them. Catching sight of the sleek-coated drove, they needed not the proposal of my lord to betake themselves with lightning speed into the court-yard below, where castellan, steward, valet, and groom crowded around to survey the animals. The rain had ceased, and they regarded them at their ease. One praised the sorrel with the star, another admired the chestnut brown, and a third petted the flea-bitten roan; and all agreed that the brutes were lithe-limbed as stags, and that none better had been bred in the country. Kohlhaas laughed gayly, and said the horses were no better than the knights who were to ride them; and with that he bade them make an offer for them. My lord, who had taken a great fancy to the sorrel stallion, inquired the price; and at the same time the steward pressed him to purchase a pair of horses, as he was short of cattle on the farm. But when the dealer named his terms, the knights found that he wished to sell his wares too dear; and my lord bade him seek out the Round Table and manage matters with King Arthur, if he valued his stock so highly. Kohlhaas, observing the castellan and the steward exchanging whispers, the while they threw telling glances on the steeds, did his best to drive a bargain. He had some vague presentiment; turning to my lord he said,—"I bought these animals six months ago for twenty-five gold florins: give me thirty and they are yours."

The knights, standing beside my lord, expressed their plain opinion that the horses were worth so much at least: but the nobleman hinted that he would give the money for the stallions but not for the geldings; however, he turned his back and made as though he would return to the castle. Kohlhaas took his horse's bridle and called to him that perhaps the next time he came that way they would manage the matter better; and with a parting salute he was about to betake himself on his journey.

He had scarcely placed his foot in the stirrup, when the castellan stepped from the group and bade him heed what had been intimated; namely, that he could not proceed without a passport. Kohlhaas turned to his Lordship and asked if this were the case, adding that if it were so, it would altogether break up his business. The nobleman appeared put out and confused, but answered, "Ay, Kohlhaas, you must get yourself a passport: talk it over with the castellan, and get you gone."

And with this he turned on his heel as though it were no concern of his. Kohlhaas replied that he was not the man to play fast and loose with the law—that when he reached Dresden he would get the passport at the government office; but that for this once, having had no notice, he would beg to be allowed to proceed.

"Well," said my lord, as a fresh gust of wind buffeted his meagre limbs, "let the poor devil pass."

Turning away, he called to his guests to accompany him; and was about to re-enter the castle when the castellan, following him up, insisted that the man should leave some pledge of his good faith, either in money or goods. My lord stood in the doorway and seemed to reflect. Kohlhaas inquired what sum would be required of him, whereon the steward muttered something about it being better that the horses themselves should be left. The castellan caught the words and cried:—

"Yes! good! that's just to the purpose: when he gets his passport he can return and fetch them at his leisure."

Kohlhaas, annoyed at so shameless a demand, reiterated that the sole object of his journey was the sale of these very horses; but the nobleman, who with chattering teeth and garments folded closely about him was caught by a gust that drove a whole deluge of rain and hail through the arched entrance, beat a hasty retreat, crying, « Let him leave the horses if he will; but if not, back through the turnpike with him, in God's name.»

The horse-dealer, seeing that it was a case of might against right, determined to give way; and detaching from the rest the pair of geldings, led them to a stable pointed out by the castellan. Leaving his groom Herse in charge, he bade him take good care of them; and accompanying his instructions with a well-filled purse, he resumed his journey with the rest of the drove. Reflecting as he jogged along towards Leipsic (where he was minded to be present at the fair), it struck him that perhaps after all the Saxon government had forbidden the import of horses, with a view to encourage breeding within the frontier.

Having transacted his business in Leipsic, he rode on to Dresden, where in one of the suburbs he possessed a house which he made his headquarters whenever he visited the petty markets in the neighborhood. Almost on the first moment of his arrival he hurried to the chancellor's office; where one of the counselors (of whom, by-the-by, he knew several) at once confirmed his first instinctive suspicion, giving his word that there was not the faintest foundation for the story he had been told. Kohlhaas laughed heartily at what he called the practical joke of my lord-of-skin-and-bone; and having obtained a certificate from the counselors, who seemed only half pleased, he turned his attention to other matters. After a while, having disposed satisfactorily of what horses he had with him, he started in the best of humors for Castle Tronka, without any bitterer feeling than that of the sorrow common to all mortals. Arrived at the frontier, the castellan examined his certificate, but made no comment; and in answer to the dealer's inquiry as to whether he could now have his horses, he grunted that he might go into the court-yard and fetch them himself. Crossing the yard, Kohlhaas was sadly grieved to learn that for sundry misdemeanors his servant Herse had been first flogged and then fairly hunted from the castle: he asked the lad who told him what these misdemeanors had been, and who had looked after the geldings meanwhile; but could get nothing out of him, but « Do' know sir; do' know, sir.» With his heart full of an evil presentiment, he went and opened the stable to which he was directed: but what was his amazement at finding, instead of two sleek, well-fed animals, a yoke of jades of no more value than so much carrion; creatures with bones like hat-pegs, with mane and tail twisted into ropes, with in fact all that could go to make up an epitome of brute suffering. The wretched animals greeted Kohlhaas with a faint neigh: and he, roused to the fiercest passion, demanded loudly how this had come about; the lad, who was standing near, replied that it was all right, that they had been fed regularly, but that as it was harvest-time and they were short of draught-horses, they had taken a turn with the others in the fields. Kohlhaas vented a string of curses against what he called «planned villainy»; but bethinking himself of his helplessness, he swallowed his wrath, and prepared to leave the castle with the horses. The castellan, however, who had heard him at a distance, came forward and asked what was the matter.

«Matter!» roared Kohlhaas: «who gave my Lord of Tronka permission to use my geldings in his fields? Look here,» he added, vainly trying with his whip to arouse some sign of life in the worn-out animals, «was it a man or a beast that brought them to this?»

The castellan, with arms akimbo, stared him impudently in the face.

«You blackguard, you; you twopenny rascal! thank God you have the jades there at all with their legs under them.» Who was to tend them when his groom had taken leg-bail? he should like to know; or was it likely his master was going to find keep and stabling for nothing? Then raising his voice, he wound up with—«Make no bones about it; take the brutes and march, or I'll turn the dogs loose and make matters smooth in no time.»

The dealer's heart beat hard against his doublet, impelling him to roll the pot-bellied scoundrel in the mud, that he might grind his brazen face under his heel. He was not yet satisfied, however; the balance wavered, for his sense of justice, delicate as a jeweler's scale, weighed right and wrong to the uttermost atom. Nevertheless, he gulped down both wrath and railing together, and—passing his fingers through the tangled manes of the poor creatures—he asked with softened voice for what fault his groom had been dismissed the castle. The castellan answered, because the fellow had given himself airs in the stable-yard: had objected to a necessary change of stables, and had insisted that the steeds of two noblemen who came on a visit to the castle should pass the night on the high-road, while his horses were snugly housed within.

Kohlhaas would have given the value of the horses to have had his man at hand, to compare his tale with that of the braggart castellan. He stood there in a brown study, mechanically disentangling each hair, when suddenly the scene changed, and Lord Wenzel of Tronka dashed in hot from the chase, followed by a cavalcade of knights, hounds, and horse-boys. The dogs set up so fierce a howl when they caught sight of the stranger that they were hardly silenced by the whips of the knights. My lord reined in and asked what the matter might be; whereupon the castellan took up his parable, and — while maliciously distorting the facts — began complaining of the uproar the dealer had made because his horses had been put to work a little on the farm, adding with scornful glee that the fellow had even refused to acknowledge them as his own.

« Those, most noble lord, are not my horses,» broke in Kohlhaas. « Those are not the horses I left here worth thirty gold florins apiece. I demand back my steeds sound and well-conditioned.»

My lord paled before his glance; but recovering, sprang from the saddle and said, « If the cursed rogue won't take 'em as they are, he may leave 'em! Hey, Hans! hey, Gunther!» he cried, as he beat the dust out of his breeches, « get up some wine, you lazy oafs;» and then ascended the stairs with the whole party. Kohlhaas said he would rather call a knacker and leave the pair to rot on a dunghill than take them to Kohlhaasenbrück as they were; and there he left them without once looking back, and swinging himself into the saddle, he took the road with a parting assurance that he would soon find a way to get justice done.

He had already struck spurs for Dresden, when the thought of the accusation that had been brought against his groom at the castle made him draw rein and ride at a foot-pace: and he had not gone half a mile before it grew upon him so much that he turned his horse's head and made for Kohlhaasenbrück, minded first to hear his servant's account of the matter; for experience whispered in his ear that he knew the world too well to expect perfection in anybody. He reflected that possibly the man had gone wrong somehow, and in that case it would be better to put up with the loss as a proper consequence of his folly; but another voice, as loud as, but more emphatic than, that of experience, kept saying to him that if the thing should prove to be a planned trick, it was his duty to strive with his whole strength for redress of his own wrong and for the future security of others. As he rode along and heard at every wayside inn of the villanies constantly practiced against those whose ill fate led them by the Castle of Tronka, this latter thought absorbed him more and more fully, so as almost to shut out entirely that noble doubt which still prompted hesitation.

On arriving at Kohlhaasenbrück, he had no sooner embraced his faithful wife and kissed the crowing children that clung around him, than he inquired after his groom Herse, asking whether anything had been seen of him.

« Mercy on us! » his wife cried: « only think, it's but a fortnight since he came back to us in a fearful plight, with scarcely a sound place in his body, and hardly able to draw breath for his wounds; we got him to bed and there he lay spitting blood: and when we inquired the why and wherefore, he told us a story of which none of us could make head or tail;—how he had been left at Castle Tronka with some horses, had been shamefully maltreated and compelled to fly the place; that the nags were still there, for they would not let him lay a finger upon them. »

« Indeed? » said Kohlhaas, laying aside his mantle; « and is he all right again now? »

« He spits blood yet, » she answered; « but he is getting stronger. I was just going to send a man to the castle to look after the horses till you came,—for I knew Herse too well to doubt his word, especially as he has so much to show for it, and I could not think for a moment that he had done anything with his charge,—but the poor fellow begged and prayed me not to risk any one in that den of thieves, saying it was better to lose the horses altogether than sacrifice a life for them. »

« Is he in bed still? » asked Kohlhaas, leisurely divesting himself of his neckcloth.

« No: he manages now to get about the yard a bit in the daytime, » she answered. « You will see that the man has not lied: not a day passes but we hear of some wanton outrage or other on those whose way lies by Castle Tronka, and this is one of them. »

« I must inquire further before I agree with you, » Kohlhaas replied. « Go, Lizzy: bring him here if he's up. »

He sat down in his arm-chair; while his wife, delighted with a calmness she so little expected, made haste to fetch the groom.

«Now tell me, pray,» said Kohlhaas, when his wife re-entered with the man, «what mischief you were up to at the castle. I have reason to be not over well pleased with you.»

The servant's pallid face flushed hotly at these words, and he remained silent for a moment.

«You are right, master,» he said at last: «for as Providence would have it, I had a tinder-box with me with which I was going to burn out the thieves; but just as I was striking the flint, I heard the cry of a child within, and threw the match into the Elbe. May God's lightning blast them, methought: 'tis his business, not mine.»

Kohlhaas looked at him with amazement, and said, «But tell me, how did you manage to get turned out of the castle?»

«All on account of a foolish trick of mine,» the man answered, wiping the sweat from his brow; «but it's no use crying over spilt milk. I would not have the horses racked to death at field-work; I said they were too young, and had never been trained to go in the traces.»

Kohlhaas, concealing his confusion as he might, corrected him in this, reminding him that they had been awhile in harness last spring, and added:—«As you were a sort of guest at the castle, it was your duty to do what lay in your power to satisfy them, and you might well have lent a helping hand when they were hard pressed to get in the harvest.»

«That is just what I did, master,» Herse answered. «When I saw what wry faces they made, I thought after all it would not kill the nags; and so, on the third morning, I harnessed them and brought in three loads of wheat.»

Kohlhaas, whose heart was in his mouth, looked down and said, «I heard no account of that, Herse;» but the latter assured him it was true.

«What they took in such bad part was that I wouldn't put the horses in again at midday before they had had their feed; and besides that, I wouldn't listen to the castellan and the steward, who wished me to give up the nags to them, and pocket for myself the money you gave me for their expenses. I turned my back on them and told them they might go further afield.»

«But this,» said Kohlhaas, «was not the reason why they drove you from the castle?»

«God forbid!» the man cried, «I did worse. One evening two knights came on a visit, and when I found their horses in the stable, and mine tethered to the rail outside, I asked the castellan where I should house them: he pointed to a pig-sty, a filthy hovel of mud and wattles, built up against the inner wall."

"You mean," broke in Kohlhaas, "that it was a stable in such a wretched condition that it looked more like a pig-sty."

"It *was* a pig-sty, master!" Herse answered; "nothing more and nothing less. I could hardly stand upright in it, and the pigs ran in and out between my legs."

"Perhaps," said Kohlhaas, "there was no room elsewhere; and of course, a knight's steed has a right to be the better housed."

"The stable was a trifle small," the groom answered, lowering his voice; "there were altogether seven knights at the castle: but if you had been master there, you would have made room by packing the steeds a little closer. I said I should go into the village and hire a stable; but the steward said he would not let the nags out of his sight, and bade me on my life not attempt to move them from the yard."

"Well," said Kohlhaas, "what did you do then?"

"As the steward told me the two knights were only passing visitors, and would be gone in the morning, I led the horses into the pig-sty; but the next day went by and they were still there, and the day following I heard that the gentlemen thought of staying several weeks."

"I daresay," said Kohlhaas, "the pig-sty wasn't so bad as you fancied it was when you first put your nose in."

"That's true," the man answered: "when I had swept it out and put it to rights a bit, it was so-so, and I gave the girl a groschen to shift for the pigs elsewhere. I managed to let the nags stand upright in the daytime by taking off the loose boards, and of a night, you know, I put them on again: the poor things stuck their necks through the roof like a pair of geese, and looked about for home or some other place where they would be better off."

"Well now," said Kohlhaas, "why on earth did they drive you from the castle?"

"Master, I'll tell you plainly," the groom answered: "because they would be rid of me; for so long as I was by they couldn't have their will with the brutes and worry 'em to death. In the servants' hall, the court-yard, and everywhere, they made wry faces at me; and as I took no heed, but let them twist their jaws out of joint if they chose, they picked a quarrel with me on purpose and drove me out."

"But why?" said Kohlhaas; "they must have had some cause for what they did."

"Of course they had, master," answered Herse, "and a most righteous one too. On the second evening of their stay in the pig-sty the horses were in a pretty pickle; so I mounted one and was taking them to the pond, when just as I got through the gate and was turning into the road, I heard a great noise from the servants' hall, and out marched castellan, steward, dogs, and servants all together, yelling and shouting like mad. 'Stop the scoundrel!' cried one; 'Have at the thief!' shrieked another: and when the gate-keeper placed himself in my path, I asked him and the wild pack that came howling around me, what the devil was up? 'Up!' roared the castellan, seizing my horse's bridle: 'where are you taking those brutes, you rascal?' and with that he gripped me by the throat. I replied, 'Why, in the name of all that's holy, to the pond of course. Do you think that I—?' 'To the pond, eh?' the fellow cried: 'I'll teach you, you thief, to go swimming along the road to Kohlhaasenbrück!' and thereupon he and the steward, with a savage wrench, tore me from the saddle, and I measured my whole length in the mud. I got up cursing them body and soul. I had left harness and horse-cloths and a bundle of linen of my own in the stable, but they did not mind that; and while the steward led the horses back, the castellan and servants laid on me with whips and cudgels, and beat me till I fell half dead beneath the archway. When I came to myself a bit and called out, 'You thieving dogs, what have you done with my horses?' the castellan shouted, 'Out of the place with you!' and calling the hounds by name, he set a round dozen of them yelping and tearing at me. I broke a pale or something from the fence, and laid three of them dead at my feet; but just as I was giving way from loss of blood and the fearful agony, a shrill whistle called the hounds back into the court-yard, the wings of the gates flew to, the bolts were drawn, and I sank down fainting on the high-road."

Kohlhaas, who had grown very pale, said with a kind of forced humor, "I fancy after all, Herse, it wasn't so much against the grain with thee to leave the place;" and seeing that his servant remained silent, with downcast look and flushed face he continued, "Come, let's have the truth: methinks the pig-sty didn't suit you; you had a sneaking preference for the stable here at home?"

"Damnation!" cried Herse. "Why, the harness-cloths and linen are there in the sty now: don't you think if I had wanted to run for it, I would have brought with me the three rix-florins I hid behind the manger wrapped in a red silk handkerchief? By God! to hear you talk so makes me long to have in my hand again the tinder-box I threw away."

"Never mind that," answered the dealer: "I am not against thee; look here, I believe word for word all that you've said, and I'd take the sacrament on each syllable; I am sorry too that you have had such hard measure in my service. Come, get you to bed, Herse; ask for a bottle of wine and make yourself easy, for I will undertake to procure you justice."

He rose from his seat, and going to his desk, made out a list of the articles left behind by the groom in the sty, specifying their value and adding the man's estimate of the expenses attendant on his illness; this done, he gave him his hand and dismissed him to his rest.

He talked over the whole matter with his wife Elizabeth, and made no secret of his intention to strain every nerve to obtain full redress; and when he had put the matter in a clear light, he was overjoyed to find that she heartily agreed with him. She said indeed that some day, perhaps, travelers less gifted with forbearance than he might happen upon the castle; that it was a good work before God and man to put a speedy end to such villainies; and that she herself would know where to find the costs of the suit if her husband would take immediate action. Kohlhaas told her she was his own brave wife, and together with the children they passed that day and the next in the quiet enjoyment of their love; but on the following morning—having dispatched all necessary business—he started for Dresden to bring his case before the tribunals. . . .

[Kohlhaas seeks to obtain redress by every means known to the law, and patiently awaits its slow process. After many disappointments, he discovers that the real impediment is Baron Tronka's interest at court; and his lawyer refuses to compromise his own position further by conducting the dealer's case. Unwilling to dwell longer in a land which denies to its inhabitants the protection of its laws, Kohlhaas sells his house and farm to one of his neighbors. His wife, however, with tearful entreaties induces him to allow her to make a last appeal to the Elector himself.]

Kohlhaas had already proved that his wife possessed foresight and determination alike; he inquired what plan she had formed as to her conduct. With downcast eyes and blushing cheeks she replied that the castellan of the electoral palace, when on duty years ago in Schwerin, had known and wooed her; true, he was now married and the father of a family, but she had reason to believe he had not quite forgotten her: indeed, she thought her husband had better content himself with simple trust, as she hoped to turn to account several matters of which it would take too long to tell. Kohlhaas was radiant with joy; he kissed his wife, and told her to do as she would, and that she only needed to be received by the castellan's wife to have at any moment the opportunity she sought. He then had the brown geldings put in; and commending her to the care of his faithful groom Sternbald, he handed the petition into the carriage and bade them God-speed.

Of all the unsuccessful efforts he had made to further his cause, this turned out the most disastrous. A few days later on he saw Sternbald enter the yard on foot, leading the horses at a snail's pace. Kohlhaas rushed out, pale as death, and found his wife lying in the carriage and suffering greatly from a bruise on the right breast. From the man he could get no plain account of what had happened: but it appeared that the castellan was not at home when they arrived, and that they had been obliged to take up their quarters in the neighborhood of the palace, whence next morning Elizabeth started, leaving orders for Sternbald to stay and tend the horses; and he had seen nothing more of her till the evening, when she was brought back in the condition he saw. He had heard that she had pushed her way boldly towards the presence of his Highness, and that one of the guards, impelled only by rude zeal for his master, had — without order — struck her with the shaft of his lance. This at least Sternbald had been told by the people who bore her unconscious to the inn; for she had not as yet been able to speak since, for the blood that gushed from her mouth. The petition, it seemed, had been afterwards taken from her by one of the knights in attendance. Sternbald wanted to saddle a horse and ride back with the news at once; but in spite of all the surgeon could urge, she had insisted upon being taken back immediately to her husband, and had forbidden them to give him any warning. Kohlhaas got her to bed: the journey had completely broken her strength, and her whole frame quivered every time she drew breath; but still he contrived to keep life in her for the space of several days.

They tried in vain to bring her to herself, that they might get out the truth of what had befallen: but she lay there with eyes fixed and glassy and spoke no word; only in the presence of death did she recover consciousness. A Lutheran clergyman (to which rising sect she, following her husband's example, had adhered) had called; and sitting by her bedside, was reading with loud and solemn voice a chapter in the Bible, when she suddenly raised her head, and throwing upon him a glance of sad meaning, took the book from his hands as though she would not have it read, and passing her fingers through it, began searching leaf by leaf until at last she found what she wanted. With a sign to Kohlhaas, who sat by the bed, she pointed to the verse, « Love your enemies — do good to those that hate you; » she pressed his hand, and with a long look of passionate love she passed away.

Kohlhaas thought, « If I forgive Lord Wenzel, so may not God forgive me! » He bent over the corpse and kissed it, bathing the face with a torrent of tears; then, closing the eyes of her he loved, he quitted the room. With the advance of the hundred florins which he had already received from the farmer on his Dresden property, he prepared for Elizabeth's interment on a scale rather befitting a princess than the wife of a simple trader: he had an oak coffin made, studded with massive brass nails and bound with the same metal, and therein he placed a silken cushion with tassels of silver and gold thread; the grave was eight yards deep, walled within with masonry: and he himself overlooked the work, standing on the brink with his youngest infant on his arm. When the day of the funeral came round, the body was robed in pure white and placed in the chief room covered with a black pall.

The minister had just finished an eloquent address beside the coffin, when Kohlhaas received the royal answer to the petition which the dead woman had borne: it was to the effect that he should fetch his horses from Castle Tronka, and not trouble the State any further in the matter on pain of instant imprisonment. When the grave had been filled in and the cross planted thereon, he dismissed those who had been present to render the last offices, and returned home. Once more he threw himself on his knees beside the bed of the departed, and then betook himself to the business of revenge. He sat down and drew up a decree, wherein, by virtue of the authority native to him, he condemned Lord Wenzel of Tronka to present himself, with the horses which had been reduced to such evil plight in his fields, within three days at Kohlhaasenbrück, there to serve in person about them till they should be restored to their former condition: this decree he dispatched to the castle by a mounted messenger, with instructions to deliver it and then make the best of his way back without losing a moment.

When the three days' grace had elapsed without anything having been seen or heard of the horses, he summoned Herse and explained to him the commands he had laid upon Lord Wenzel as to the tending of the animals, and inquired whether Herse had a mind to strike spurs with him for the castle and haul his lordship thence by force; he further asked whether, when they had taken him and set him to work in the stables at Kohlhaasenbrück, Herse felt able and willing to correct with a cut of his whip any occasional tendency to laziness. When Herse caught the import of his words, he shouted, "This very day, if you will, master." He swore he would plait a thong ten strands thick to teach the rascal how to use the curry-comb.

Kohlhaas said no more, but went and gave up possession of the house, dispatching the children ere evening beyond the frontier to the care of his relations in Schwerin: and when night fell he gathered his servants together, seven in number, each true as steel, and bound to him for life and death; he armed and mounted them, and with them sallied forth towards Castle Tronka.

At dusk of the third day, he and his little band rode beneath the walls. The toll collector and the gate-keeper were standing talking together under the archway when the eight dashed in, overthrowing them in their course; they spurred into the churchyard, and while some set fire to the sheds and other woodwork, Herse made his way up the winding staircase to the castellan's rooms. He found his man playing cards with the steward — both partly undressed — and fell upon the twain, cut and thrust, sparing nothing. At the same time Kohlhaas sped to the great hall of the castle. His coming was like the judgment of God. My lord was just stirring the laughter of a knot of young friends by a recital of the summons the horse-dealer had served upon him, but while reading it he caught the harsh tones of his enemy in the court below. Pallid as a corpse, he threw down the paper, and warning all present to look to their lives, vanished from the place. Kohlhaas, being confronted at the door by a certain Sir Hans of Tronka, seized him by the throat and hurled him into a corner, spattering his brains upon the walls; while his servants made short work of the rest, who had armed themselves, by securing them or forcing them to flight. But the dealer sought Lord Wenzel in vain: no one had seen him, and finding that the terrified prisoners could tell nothing, he burst open with a kick the doors leading to the inner apartments, and sword in hand essayed every possible hiding-place,—still in vain, however. At last he came down, cursing, into the court-yard, and gave orders to set a guard at every point by which he might escape.

Meanwhile smoke and flame broke forth on every side; the fire, leaping from the sheds, had seized first upon the main building and then upon the wings. Sternbald and three more were tearing everything that hand could move, and piling it for booty in the yard. With loud shouts they greeted Herse when he thrust his head from the window above, and hurled down the dead bodies of the castellan and steward with those of their wives and children. As Kohlhaas was descending the staircase, an old rheumatic housekeeper of my lord's threw herself at his feet whining for mercy; he asked where her master was, and she replied with cracked and trembling voice that she thought he had taken refuge in the chapel. Kohlhaas called two of his men, for lack of keys broke in the door with axe and crowbar, and overturning bench and altar, was maddened with the discovery that his victim had fled.

Just as Kohlhaas was sallying from the chapel, it chanced that a lad belonging to the castle came running to try and save his lordship's chargers, which were stabled in a vast stone building now threatened by the flames. Kohlhaas, who had just caught sight of his two geldings, stopped him, and pointing to the thatched shed in which they were secured, asked why he did not bring them out; the lad replied that the place was on fire, and taking the key, attempted to open the door of the stable. Kohlhaas knocked him aside, and snatching the key savagely from the door, threw it over the wall; then, amid the ruthless laughter of his men, he so belabored the lad with the flat of his sword that he was fain to rush into the burning shed and unloose the brutes. He had barely seized their halters when the roof fell in, and his face was corpse-like when he struggled forth out of the smoke into the yard. Kohlhaas no longer heeded him, and turned his back upon him once and again; but the lad followed to where he was standing with several of his servants, and when at last he faced him and asked what he should now do with the horses, Kohlhaas lifted his foot and launched at him so savage a kick that had it taken him, it must have been his death. Then without deigning another syllable he mounted his brown steed, and leaving his men to their unholy business, rode beneath the archway and there awaited the dawn of day. . . .

[Kohlhaas pursues Baron Tronka to the convent where he has taken refuge; his band of malcontents increases; he forms a military organization, burns villages, and terrorizes the entire country. The regular troops are called out against him, and are defeated. Kohlhaas lays siege to Leipsic. At this point Luther interposes with a proclamation against Kohlhaas, and the men are shaken in their allegiance to their intrepid leader. He resolves to have an interview with Luther, that he may convince him of the absolute justice of his cause. As a price is set upon his head, it is a perilous undertaking, and he must go disguised.]

Kohlhaas assumed the dress of a Thuringian peasant, and summoning several of his most reliable men, he placed Sternbald in command of the party assembled at Lützen; explaining that business of importance called him to Wittenberg, and that no attack need be feared within three days, he then took his departure, promising to return within that time. Under an assumed name, he took up his quarters in a little inn at Wittenberg, and at nightfall — carrying beneath his cloak a pair of pistols which he had captured at Castle Tronka — he made his way to Luther's residence.

The doctor was sitting at his desk, engaged with a heap of books and manuscripts; but seeing a stranger push open the door, enter, and then carefully bolt it behind him, he inquired who he was, and what was his business. With a half-fearful consciousness of the terror he was causing, the man advanced, and doffing his hat respectfully, said, "I am Michael Kohlhaas, the horse-dealer."

Luther sprang from his chair and cried, "Get thee from hence, thou villain! thy breath is the plague, and the sight of thee perdition." He was pushing past the table to where a bell stood, when Kohlhaas, without stirring from the spot, drew a pistol and said, "Most reverend sir, touch but that bell, and this shall lay me dead at your feet: be seated and lend me your ear. Were you among the angels whose psalms you are inditing, you would not be safer than with me.»

Luther resumed his seat and asked, «What would you with me?»

Kohlhaas replied, «I come to disprove your accusation that I am an unjust man. In your epistle you declare that those in authority wot not of my cause. Go to, then: procure me a safe-conduct to Dresden, and I will lay my suit before them in person.»

These words at once puzzled the doctor and somewhat allayed his fears. «Godless and terrible evil-doer!» he cried, «who gave thee the right to set thyself up a judge and fall upon the lord of Tronka? Foiled at the castle, by whose authority didst thou dare to carry fire and sword into the heart of the community that shields him?»

Kohlhaas answered, «By no one, most reverend sir, was this authority granted to me: I was deceived and misled by information I received from Dresden. The war I wage against the community is a crime, if, as you have pledged your word, I was never cast out from its midst.»

«Cast out!» Luther exclaimed: «what mad idea hath seized thee? Who could have cast thee out from the community in which thou wast bred? Nay, canst quote me one — be he who he might — as long as nations have been on earth, who has thus been cast out?»

Kohlhaas answered, clenching his fist, «I call him an outcast to whom the protection of the law is denied. I need that protection in the peaceful exercise of my calling; for that, and that alone, I and mine seek security in the bosom of a community, and whoso denies it to me casts me out to the savages of the wilderness, and — who will dispute it? — himself places in my hands the club that serves for my own defense.»

«Who denied thee the protection of the law? Did I not write that thy plaint had never reached the ear of thy sovereign? If his ministers bring not forward the suits that are preferred, or abuse his hallowed name without his knowledge, who but God can call him to account for the choice of such servants? and art thou — thou God-abandoned man of wrath — art thou empowered to bring him to justice therefore?»

«Go to!» Kohlhaas answered. «If my sovereign has not cast me out, I will return once more to the community he protects.

Again I say, procure me a safe-conduct to Dresden, and I will disband the force now gathered before Lützen, and will depart to urge the suit that was rejected by the tribunal of my country."

Luther sat fretfully tossing about the papers that lay on his desk, and remained silent. The high ground this marvelous man took in dealing with the State was not to his taste. Recalling to mind the judicial decision which was forwarded from Kohlhaasenbrück to Lord Wenzel, he inquired what Kohlhaas was minded to demand from the tribunal at Dresden. The dealer answered:

"Chastisement of the nobleman, according to the letter of the law; restoration of the horses to their former condition; and compensation for the losses which my servant Herse, who fell at Mühlberg, sustained through the violence practiced on us."

"Compensation for losses!" cried Luther. "Hast gotten thee thousands on thousands from Jew and Christian by bills and mortgages to further thy wild, fanciful revenge? Wilt thou add these to thy account when the day of reckoning comes?"

"God forbid!" Kohlhaas returned: "house and land, the wealth I possessed, are gone; these I ask not back, nay not even the cost I was at to bury my wife. Herse's old mother will produce a note of the expenses of his illness, and a list of the articles her son lost at Castle Tronka; and the government may refer to an expert the assessment of the damages I suffered by the delay in the sale of the horses."

"Mad and terrible man," exclaimed Luther, "thou art beyond all comprehension;" and with steadily fixed gaze continued, "when thy sword hath already gotten thee the most fearful vengeance on the head of this man, what impels thee to demand a judgment against him, which, when it falls at length, will be but dust in the balance?"

A tear rolled down Kohlhaas's cheek as he answered, "Most reverend sir, this thing has cost me my wife; Kohlhaas would show the world that she did not perish in an unjust cause. Give me my will in this matter and let the voice of justice be heard. All else that may be in dispute between us I yield to your decision."

"If matters be as public report states," answered Luther, "thy demand is just; and hadst thou referred thy claim to the decision of thy sovereign before assuming the business of revenge, I doubt not that—item by item—it would have been granted thee. But consider well: had it not been better thou hadst forgiven Lord Wenzel for the sake of Him who saved thee, and hadst taken the brutes by the halters and ridden them home, wretched and famine-stricken as they were, to fatten in thine own stables at Kohlhaasenbrück?»

Kohlhaas walked to the window and answered, «Maybe; maybe; yet perchance not. Had I known they would have been fed on my wife's heart's blood, maybe, reverend sir, I would have acted as you say, and not spared a bushel or two of oats. But now they have cost me so dear, let things have their course; be the judgment given that is my right, and let Lord Wenzel get me my nags into condition.»

Luther again applied himself to his papers. For a while he was lost in thought, but at last turned to Kohlhaas and said that he would essay to mediate between him and the Elector. He begged him to suspend all further operations with the force at Lützen; adding that if his Highness granted the safe-conduct, it would be made known by public proclamation. Kohlhaas bent down to kiss his hand, but he waved him away and continued:—

«Whether the Elector will let mercy take the place of justice, I know not. I have heard that he has already assembled an army to assail you in your quarters; but be that as it may, rest assured that if I fail the fault will not be mine.»

The dealer answered that his intercession sufficed to remove every doubt. Luther saluted him with another wave of the hand, and was returning to his labors, when Kohlhaas sank on his knees before him and preferred yet one other humble request. He had been accustomed all his life to partake of the Lord's Supper at Whitsuntide, but had this year neglected the duty on account of his present enterprise: would the reverend doctor, he asked, receive his confession and thereafter dispense unto him the holy sacrament? Luther darted an inquiring glance upon him, and after a moment's reflection, said:—

«Yes, Kohlhaas, it shall be so; but remember that He of whose body thou wouldst partake forgave his enemies. Art thou prepared,» he added, marking intently the dealer's emotion, «art thou prepared in like manner to forgive the man who did thee wrong? And wilt thou then hie thee to Castle Tronka and lead thence thy horses to be fed in their own stables at Kohlhaasenbrück?»

"Most reverend sir," Kohlhaas answered with mantling color, grasping the doctor's hand, "why ask this now? The Lord himself forgave not all his enemies. I am content to forgive my two liege lords, the Electors, the castellan and the steward, the noble lords Hinz and Kunz, and all else who have wronged me in this matter; but Lord Wenzel I must needs compel to bring my horses into condition."

With a look of deep displeasure Luther turned his back upon him and rang the bell. An amanuensis made his way with a light across the antechamber, while Kohlhaas, much moved, remained in the same position, with his kerchief to his eyes; but observing that Luther was again busy writing, and hearing the vain attempts of the man to unclose the bolted door, he rose and opened it for him. Luther, with a side glance at the stranger, bade the amanuensis light him out; the man seemed much puzzled at the presence of the unknown visitor, but took the house key from a nail and waited at the half-open door. Kohlhaas, with his hat between his hands, spoke once more with deep emotion: "Most reverend sir," he said, "I cannot then hope to partake of that which I desired! I cannot be reconciled to—!"

Luther broke in hastily, "To thy Savior? no: to thy sovereign, perhaps. I have promised I will do what in me lies."

Thereupon he signed to his attendant to comply with his orders without delay. Kohlhaas pressed his hands upon his breast with a look of bitter agony, and following the man down-stairs vanished into the night. . . . .

[Luther procures the safe-conduct, a general amnesty is granted, and Kohlhaas disbands his troop. Upon his return to Kohlhaasenbrück, the dealer buys back his old home and awaits the promised restoration of his horses; but through the machinations of his enemies at court he is treacherously arrested, charged with murder, and condemned to death. The Elector wishes to pardon him; but the Emperor himself insists upon the execution of the sentence, since Kohlhaas has offended against imperial law by waging civil war. Reluctantly the Elector pronounces the sentence.]

Arrived at the place of death, he found the Elector of Brandenburg present on horseback, with his retinue, among whom he observed Lord Henry of Geusau, and a vast concourse of people. On the Elector's right was Francis Müller, the imperial advocate, bearing a copy of the judicial sentence; on his left, his own representative, Anthony Zäuner, with the judgment of the Dresden tribunal; and in the centre of the ring formed by the crowd there stood a herald bearing a bundle of linen, and holding by their bridles a pair of noble, sleek-coated, prancing steeds. Lord Henry, it seems, had pressed the suit against Lord Wenzel of Tronka point by point with unsparing rigor, and with such success that the horses had been withdrawn from the knacker's and been restored to honor by the ceremony of waving a flag over their heads; after which they had been intrusted to the nobleman's servants to be brought into condition: this accomplished, they were delivered over to Zäuner in the market-place at Dresden in presence of a special commission. And so it was that, when Kohlhaas made his way to the rising ground followed by the guard, the Elector thus addressed him. "At length, Kohlhaas, the day has come when full justice shall be meted out to thee: behold, here I deliver unto thee all of which thou wast by violence deprived at Castle Tronka, and all that I, as thy sovereign, was bound to recover for thee; here I restore unto thee thy horses, the neckcloth, money, and linen, nay,—even the expenses of the illness of thy servant Herse, who fell at Mühlberg. Art thou content with me?"

Kohlhaas set down his children beside him, and began to read the judgment which was handed to him at a sign from the lord chancellor. When he came to an article which condemned Lord Wenzel to two years' imprisonment, carried away by the fullness of his satisfaction he crossed his hands upon his breast, and fell upon his knees before the Elector. Rising to his feet, he laid his hand upon his head and declared to the chancellor that his highest desire on earth was accomplished. Stepping up to the horses, he did not conceal his delight,—patting their arched and rounded necks; from them he turned again to the Lord of Geusau, and told him cheerily that he intended them for his two sons, Henry and Leopold. The chancellor bent towards him from his saddle and promised, in the Elector's name, that his last wishes should be solemnly regarded; he bade him, further, to dispose as he pleased of the articles contained in the bundle. Kohlhaas at once called Herse's aged mother, whom he had seen in the crowd, and saying, "There, good mother, these belong to you," handed her the things, with the sum he had himself received as compensation, for the support and comfort of her declining years.

The Elector then spake:—"Kohlhaas the horse-dealer, now that thou hast thus received full satisfaction for the wrong done unto thee, prepare thyself to atone to his Imperial Majesty, whose representative is here present, for thine own outrages against the peace of his realm."

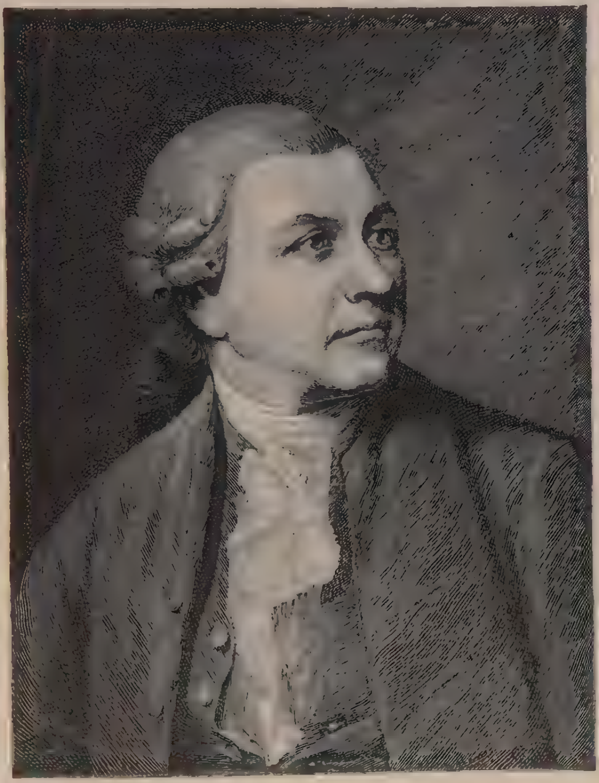
Kohlhaas took off his hat and threw it on the ground, and said, "I am ready!"

He pressed his little ones each tenderly to his breast, and confided them to his friend the farmer; and while the latter silently but tearfully withdrew from the scene, he walked up to the block with unwavering step, ... and immediately after, his head fell beneath the axe of the executioner.

Here ends the story of Kohlhaas. Amid the lamentations of the people his body was placed in a coffin; and as the bearers were about to carry it out to a church-yard in the suburbs, the Elector called for the sons of the departed and dubbed them knights, telling the chancellor he would have them brought up among his own pages.

Broken in body and mind, the Elector of Saxony soon after appeared in his capital; and the rest of the story the reader may find in the chronicles of his time.

In the last century, several hearty, sturdy descendants of Kohlhaas were still to be found in Mecklenburg.



F. KLOPSTOCK.

FRIEDRICH GOTTLIEB KLOPSTOCK*

(1724-1803)

BY KUNO FRANCKE

IT WAS in 1748, the same year in which Frederick the Great, in the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, achieved his first political triumph, that Friedrich Klopstock, in the first three cantos of his 'Messias,' sounded that morning call of joyous idealism and exalted individualism which was to be the dominant note of the best in all modern German literature. The magic spell which the name of Klopstock exercised upon all aspiring minds of the middle of the eighteenth century has been vividly described by Goethe, in Werther's account of the thunder-storm which he and Lotte observed together. «In the distance the thunder was dying away; a glorious rain fell gently upon the land, and the most refreshing perfume arose to us out of the fullness of the warm air. She stood leaning upon her elbow; her glance penetrated the distance, she looked heavenward and upon me; I saw her eyes fill with tears; she laid her hand upon mine, and said—'Klopstock!' I at once remembered the beautiful ode 'Die Frühlingsfeier' (The Spring Festival) which was in her mind, and lost myself in the torrent of emotions which rushed over me with this name.»

On the other hand, Schiller has well expressed the limitations of Klopstock's genius, when in trying to define his place among modern poets he says: «His sphere is always the realm of ideas, and he makes everything lead up to the infinite. One might say that he robs everything that he touches of its body in order to turn it into spirit, whereas other poets seek to clothe the spiritual with a body.» It is undoubtedly this lack of plastic power, this inability to create living, palpable beings, which prevented Klopstock from attaining the high artistic ideal which his first great effusions seemed to prophesy. The older he grew, the more he withdrew from the actual world, the more he surrounded himself with the halo of superhuman experiences, the more he insisted on describing the indescribable and expressing the inexpressible; until at last the same man whose first youthful utterances had set free mighty forces of popular passion, was intelligible only to a few adepts initiated into the mysteries of his artificial, esoteric language.

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*A portion of this sketch is drawn from the author's work, 'Social Forces in German Literature,' by the kind permission of its publishers, Messrs. Henry Holt & Co. of New York.

And yet it is easy to see that it was precisely through this exaggerated and overstrained spirituality that Klopstock achieved the greatest of his work. He would never have produced the marvelous impression upon his contemporaries which he did produce, had he attempted to present life as it is. That task had been done by the realistic comedy and novel of the seventeenth century. What was needed at Klopstock's time was a higher view of human existence, the kindling of larger emotions, the pointing out of loftier aims. A man was needed who should give utterance to that religious idealism, which, though buried under the ruins of popular independence, was nevertheless the one vital principle of Protestantism not yet extinct; a man who, through an exalted conception of nationality, should inspire his generation with a new faith in Germany's political future; a man who, by virtue of his own genuine sympathy with all that is human in the noblest sense, and through his unwavering belief in the high destiny of mankind, should usher in a new era of enlightened cosmopolitanism. It was Klopstock's spirituality which enabled him to assume this threefold leadership; and the immeasurable services rendered by him in this capacity to the cause of religion, fatherland, and humanity, may well make us forget the artistic shortcomings by which they were accompanied.

Klopstock led German literature from the narrow circle of private emotions and purposes to which the absolutism of the seventeenth century had come near confining it, into the broad realm of universal sympathy. He was the first great freeman since the days of Luther. He did not, like Haller, content himself with the sight of an independent but provincial and primitive life, as afforded by the rural communities of Switzerland. He did not, like Gellert, turn away from the oppressed and helpless condition of the German people to a weakly, exaggerated cultivation of himself. He addressed himself to the whole nation; nay, to all mankind. And by appealing to all that is grand and noble; by calling forth those passions and emotions which link the human to the divine; by awakening the poor downtrodden souls of men who thus far had known themselves only as the subjects of princes to the consciousness of their moral and spiritual citizenship,—he became the prophet of that invisible republic which now for nearly a century and a half has been the ideal counterpart in German life of a stern monarchical reality.

From the æsthetic point of view, Klopstock is above all a master of musical expression. His odes—in which he celebrates nature, friendship, freedom, fatherland—remind us of Richard Wagner in the boldness of their rhythmic effects and in their irresistible appeal to passionate emotion. Even his great religious epic 'Der Messias' (The Messiah) is not so much an epic as a high-pitched musical composition. Reality of events, clearness of motive, naturalness of character, directness of style,—these are things for which in most parts of the poem we look in vain. Throughout its twenty cantos we constantly circle between heaven, hell, and earth, without at any given moment seeming to know where we are; and instead of straightforward action we often must be satisfied with a portentous glance, an effusive prayer, or a mysterious sigh. But these defects of the 'Messiah' as an epic poem are offset by an extraordinary wealth of lyric motives. Indeed, the narrative part of the poem should be looked upon merely as the recitative element of an oratorio, connecting those passages with each other in which the composition rises to its height,—the arias and choruses. Nearly every important speech in the 'Messiah' is a lyric song, and at least one entire canto—the twentieth—is given over to choral effects: from beginning to end this canto is a succession of crowds of jubilant souls thronging about the Redeemer, as he slowly pursues his triumphal path through the heavens, until at last he ascends the throne and sits at the right hand of the Father. It would be hard to imagine a more impressive *finale* than this bursting of the universe into a mighty hymn of praise echoing from star to star, and embracing the voices of all zones and ages; and it is indeed strange that a poet who was capable of such visions as these should have been taken to task by modern critics for not having confined himself more closely to the representation of actual conditions.

Klopstock was a true liberator. He was the first among modern German poets who drew his inspiration from the depth of a heart beating for all humanity. He was the first among them greater than his works. By putting the stamp of his own wonderful personality upon everything that he wrote or did,—by lifting himself, his friends, the objects of his love and veneration, into the sphere of extraordinary spiritual experiences,—he raised the ideals of his age to a higher pitch; and although his memory has been dimmed through the greater men who came after him, the note struck by him still vibrates in the finest chords of the life of to-day.

Kuno Francke

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.—Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock was born at Quedlinburg on July 2d, 1724. During his school-days at Schulpforta he conceived the plan of the 'Messiah.' The first three cantos were published anonymously during his university career at Leipzig in 1748, and made a deep impression upon Germany. Frederick V. of Denmark invited him to Copenhagen and offered him a pension to enable him to finish the poem. He accepted. The last cantos appeared in 1773. With Klopstock a new era in German verse began, for he abandoned the formal mechanical rhyming for the rhythmic swing of classic measures. It is in his odes that he reaches the height of his poetic genius. He died in Ottensee near Hamburg, on March 14th, 1803.

THE ROSE-WREATH

I FOUND her by the shady rill;
I bound her with a wreath of rose:
She felt it not, but slumbered still.

I looked on her; and on the spot
My life with hers did blend and close:
I felt it, but I knew it not.

Some lisping, broken words I spoke,
And rustled light the wreath of rose;
Then from her slumber she awoke.

She looked on me; and from that hour
Her life with mine did blend and close;
And round us it was Eden's bower.

THE SUMMER NIGHT

WHEN o'er the woods that sleep below,
The moonbeam pours her gentle light,
And odors of the lindens flow
On the cool airs of night,—

Thoughts overshade me of the tomb,
Where my beloved rest. I see
In the deep forest naught but gloom;
No blossom breathes to me.

Such nights, ye dead, with you I passed!
How cool and odorous streamed the air!
The moonbeam then, so gently cast,
Made Nature's self more fair!

HERMANN AND THUSNELDA

HA! THERE comes he, with sweat, with blood of Romans,
And with dust of the fight all stained! Oh, never
Saw I Hermann so lovely!
Never such fire in his eyes!

Come! I tremble for joy; hand me the Eagle
And the red, dripping sword! come, breathe, and rest thee;
Rest thee here in my bosom;
Rest from the terrible fight!

Rest thee, while from thy brow I wipe the big drops,
And the blood from thy cheek!—that cheek, how glowing!
Hermann! Hermann! Thusnelda
Never so loved thee before!

No, not then, when thou first, in old oak shadows,
With that manly brown arm didst wildly grasp me!
Spell-bound I read in thy look
That immortality then

Which thou now hast won. Tell to the forests,
Great Augustus, with trembling, amidst his gods now,
Drinks his nectar; for Hermann,
Hermann immortal is found!

«Wherefore curl'st thou my hair? Lies not our father
Cold and silent in death? Oh, had Augustus
Only headed his army,—
He should lie bloodier there!»

Let me lift up thy hair; 'tis sinking, Hermann:
Proudly thy locks should curl above the crown now!
Sigmar is with the immortals!
Follow, and mourn him no more!

THE TWO MUSES

I SAW—Oh, tell me, saw I what now takes place?
Beheld I the future?—I saw the muse of Germany,
Side by side with her of Britain,
Fly with hot speed to the goals of coronation.

Two goals, dimly gleaming, far as the eye could reach,
Bounded the race-ground. O'er one in majesty

Oaks cast their shadows; near the other
Palm-trees were waving in evening splendors.

At home in contest, stepped she of Albion
Out on the arena,—proudly as when of old
So matched with Grecian muse and Roman,
She trod the hot sand for the prize of glory.

There stood the youthful, trembling combatant;
With manly emotion she trembled, and fiery
Flaming blushes, victory's omens,
Streamed o'er her cheek, and her golden hair flew.

E'en now, with labor, fast in her heaving breast
She holds the breath down; bent on the goal she hangs;
She seems to see the herald's trumpet
Rise to his lips,—and her drunken eye swims.

Proud of her rival, prouder of herself, then
Spake the lofty Britoness, and measured with noble mien
Thee, Thuiscona:—«Yes, by the Bards, I
Grew up with thee in the ancient oak grove.

«But Fame had told me thou wert not living now.
O Muse, forgive me, if thou immortal art,
Forgive, that now so late I learn it;
But at the goal must it yet be taught me!

«Lo, there it stands! But mark'st thou the crownèd one
So far beyond it? Maiden, this proud reserve—
This self-command—this glance of fire
Downward to earth cast—I know its meaning.

«Yet weigh, one moment, ere, big with danger, sounds
Yon herald's trumpet! Was it not I who once
Measured the ground with her of Thermopylæ,
And with the famed of the seven hills too?»

She spake. The herald drew nearer, and with him came
Swift the decisive moment.—«I love thee!»
With flaming look quick spake Teutona:—
«Britoness, yea, I do wildly love thee;

«Yet more, far more—I love immortality
And yonder palms! Then touch, if thy genius
So wills it, touch them first; yet the moment
When thou shalt seize it, the crown is mine too.

«And, oh, how I tremble! O ye immortals,
Haply I *may* reach the proud goal before thee.
Then, oh, then may I feel thy hot breath
Stir my loose locks as thou pantest after.»

The trumpet rang. They flew as on eagles' wings.
Far along the race-ground boiled up the clouds of dust.
I looked: beyond the oak yet thicker
Rolled the dark mass, and my eye had lost them.

PROPHECY

FROM the charger's glances, the hoof's uplifting,
Stamping of hoofs, neighing, snorting, and bound,
The bards foretold fate; I too see,
And my eye pierces the future.

Will it gall forever? Thy yoke, Germania,
Soon it will fall: one more century yet,
And then it is done; then the rule
Of the sword yields to the reason.

For with curving neck through the forest rushed he,
Bounded along, tossed his mane to the wind,—
The steed,—as an omen, with scorn
For the storm's rage and the stream's rage.

On the meadow stood he, and stamped and neighing
Lifted his eyes; careless grazed he, and proud,
Nor looked on the rider who lay
In his blood, dead by the merestone.

It is not forever! Thy yoke, Germania,
Soon it will fall: one more century yet,
And then it is done; then the rule
Of the sword yields to the reason.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature› by Francis J. Lange

FROM 'THE SPRING FESTIVAL'

Would that I might praise thee, O Lord, as my soul thirsts!
Ever more gloriously dost thou reveal thyself!
Ever darker grows the night around thee
And more replete with blessings.

Do ye see the witness of his presence, the sudden flash?
Do ye hear Jehovah's thunder?
Hear ye his voice,
The convulsing thunder of the Lord?

Lord! Lord! God!
Merciful and kind!
Adored and praised
Be thy glorious name!

And the blasts of the tempest? They carry the thunder!
How they roar! How they surge through the forest with resounding waves!
And now they are silent! Slowly wanders
The sombre cloud.

Do ye see the new witness of his presence, the winged flash?
Hear ye high in the clouds the thunder of the Lord?
He shouts — Jehovah! Jehovah!
And the shattered woods reek.

But not our hut!
Our Father commanded
His destroyer
To pass by our hut!

But the kind and copious rain
Resounds across the fields.
The thirsting earth is refreshed
And heaven unburdened of its blessings.

And lo! Jehovah comes no more in the tempest!
In the softly whispering gentle breezes
Jehovah comes,
And beneath Him bends the bow of peace.

Translated for 'A Library of the World's Best Literature' by Francis J. Lange

TO YOUNG

Die, aged prophet! Lo, thy crown of palms
Has long been springing, and the tear of joy
Quivers on angel-lids
Astart to welcome thee!
Why linger? Hast thou not already built
Above the clouds thy lasting monument?
Over thy 'Night Thoughts,' too,
The pale free-thinkers watch,
And feel there's prophecy amid the song
When of the dead-awakening trump it speaks,
Of coming final doom
And the wise will of Heaven.
Die! Thou hast taught me that the name of death
Is to the just a glorious sound of joy!
But be my teacher still;
Become my genius there!

Translation of W. Taylor.

MY RECOVERY

Recovery,—daughter of Creation too,
Though not for immortality designed,—
The Lord of life and death
Sent thee from heaven to me!
Had I not heard thy gentle tread approach,
Not heard the whisper of thy welcome voice,
Death had with iron foot
My chilly forehead pressed.
'Tis true, I then had wandered where the earths
Roll around suns; had strayed along the path
Where the maned comet soars
Beyond the armèd eye;
And with the rapturous, eager greet had hailed
The inmates of those earths and of those suns;
Had hailed the countless host
That throng the comet's disk;
Had asked the novice questions, and obtained
Such answers as a sage vouchsafes to youth;
Had learned in hours far more
Than ages here unfold!

But I had then not ended here below
What, in the enterprising bloom of life,
Fate with no light behest
Required me to begin.
Recovery,—daughter of Creation too,
Though not for immortality designed,—
The Lord of life and death
Sent thee from heaven to me!

Translation of W. Taylor.

THE CHOIRS

Dear dream which I must ne'er behold fulfilled,
Thou beamy form, more fair than orient day,
Float back, and hover yet
Before my swimming sight!

Do they wear crowns in vain, that they forbear
To realize the heavenly portraiture?
Shall marble hearse them all,
Ere the bright change be wrought?

Hail, chosen ruler of a freer world!
For thee shall bloom the never-fading song,
Who bidd'st it be,—to thee
Religion's honors rise.

Yes! could the grave allow, of thee I'd sing:
For once would inspiration string the lyre,—
The streaming tide of joy,
My pledge for loftier verse.

Great is thy deed, my wish. He has not known
What 'tis to melt in bliss, who never felt
Devotion's raptures rise
On sacred Music's wing;

Ne'er sweetly trembled, when adoring choirs
Mingle their hallowed songs of solemn praise,
And at each awful pause
The unseen choirs above.

Long float around my forehead, blissful dream!
I hear a Christian people hymn their God,
And thousands kneel at once,
Jehovah, Lord, to thee!

The people sing their Savior, sing the Son;
Their simple song according with the heart,
Yet lofty, such as lifts
The aspiring soul from earth.

On the raised eyelash, on the burning cheek,
The young tear quivers; for they view the goal,
Where shines the golden crown,
Where angels wave the palm.

Hush! the clear song wells forth. Now flows along
Music, as if poured artless from the breast;
For so the Master willed
To lead its channeled course.

Deep, strong, it seizes on the swelling heart,
Scorning what knows not to call down the tear,
Or shroud the soul in gloom
Or steep in holy awe.

Borne on the deep, slow sounds, a holy awe
Descends. Alternate voices sweep the dome,
Then blend their choral force,—
The theme, *Impending Doom;*

Or the triumphal *Hail to Him who rose,*
While all the host of heaven o'er Sion's hill
Hovered, and praising saw
Ascend the Lord of Life.

One voice alone, one harp alone, begins;
But soon joins in the ever fuller choir.
The people quake. They feel
A glow of heavenly fire.

Joy, joy! they scarce support it. Rolls aloud
The organ's thunder,—now more loud and more,—
And to the shout of all
The temple trembles too.

Enough! I sink! The wave of people bows
Before the altar,—bows the front to earth;
They taste the hallowed cup,
Devoutly, deeply, still.

One day, when rest my bones beside a fane,
Where thus assembled worshipers adore,

The conscious grave shall heave,
Its flowerets sweeter bloom;

And on the morn that from the rock He sprang,
When panting Praise pursues his way,
I'll hear — *He rose again*
Vibrating through the tomb.

Translation of W. Taylor.

FROM ‹THE MESSIAH›

Seven times the thunder's stroke had rent the veil,
When now the voice of God in gentle tone
Was heard descending: «God is Love,» it spoke;
«Love, ere the worlds or their inhabitants
To life were called. In the accomplishment
Of this, my most mysterious, highest act,
Love am I still. Angels, ye shall behold
The death of earth's great Judge, the eternal Son;
And ye shall learn to know the Deity,
With adoration new to invoke his name.
Should not his arm uphold ye, at the sight
Of that dread day in terror ye would fade;
For finite are your forms!» The voice now ceased.
Their holy hands the admiring angels clasped
In silent awe. A sign the Almighty made,
And in the face divine, Eloa read
The mandate given. To the celestial host
He cried, «Lift up your eyes to the Most High,
Ye chosen, favored children! Ye have longed
(God is your witness) to behold this day
Of his Messiah, this atoning day!
Shout, then, ye cherubim! behold your God;
The First and Last, the great Jehovah, deigns
To meet your wish. Yon seraph, messenger
From the eternal Son on your behalf,
Is to the altar sent. Had ye not been
Permitted thus to view the wondrous work
Of man's redemption, secret it had passed
In solitary, silent mystery.
But now, while sons of earth shall joyful sing
This day throughout eternity, our voice
In shouts shall join their chorus. With glad eye

CHRIST LEAVING THE PRÆTORIUM
(The "Messiah")

From a Painting by Gustave Dore

Of piercing vision shall we contemplate
This mystery of atonement; clearer far
Shall we perceive it than the weeping band,
Who, though in error clouded, faithful still
Surround their Savior. Ah, what shall befall
His hardened persecutors! From life's book
Their names have long been blotted. Light divine
Jehovah grants alone to his redeemed;
No more with tears shall they behold the blood
For their atonement shed, but see its stream
Merge in the ocean of immortal life.
Oh, then in the soft lap of peace consoled,
The festival of light, and endless rest,
Triumphant shall they celebrate! Ye hosts
Of seraphim, and ye blest ransomed souls
Of righteous patriarchs, the jubilee,
The Sabbath of eternity, draws near!
Race after race of man shall thronging join
Your happy numbers, till, the reckoning filled,
The final doom pronounced, with glorious forms
All shall anew be clothed, and jointly taste
One universal bliss! Now, angels, haste!
Bid the seraphic guardians, who by God
To rule the spheres are stationed, straight prepare
To solemnize the great mysterious Day!
Ye patriarchs, from whom the Savior draws
His mortal lineage, to that sun repair
Which lights redemption's theatre! From thence
Ye may your great Redeemer view! A day
Jehovah sanctifies; a holy day
Greater than that which by your festal songs,
Ye mighty seraphim, was solemnized,
When, from creation pausing, God proclaimed
His primal Sabbath. Then, full well ye know,
Angelic powers, how bright young Nature smiled,
How fresh and lovely; how the morning stars,
With you, to their Creator homage paid.
Behold, a greater work the eternal Son
Will soon accomplish! Haste then, angels, haste!
Proclaim it through creation! Lo, the day
Of the Messiah's free obedience comes,
The Sabbath of the eternal covenant!"
   Eloa ceased. All Heaven in silence heard,—
Their eyes uplifted toward the sanctuary.

To Gabriel then a sign the Almighty made,
And swift the seraph to the throne advanced,
And secret charge received to bear behest
To Uriel, the sun's regent, and to those
Who o'er the earth bear rule, of high import,
Touching the Savior's death. Their golden seats
Meantime the high seraphic powers now left,
By Gabriel followed. Ere he yet approached
The mystic altar of the earth, his ear
Caught the deep murmured sighs, which low were
breathed,
In fervent wishes for the expected hour
Of man's salvation. There distinct arose
The voice of Adam, who through ages wept
His hapless fall. This was the altar seen
By him in Patmos, the high-favored seer
Of the new covenant: thence he heard the voice
Of martyred saints descend, whose plaintive cries
Mourned the delay of vengeance. Toward this spot
Gabriel advanced; when swift the first of men,
Eager to meet the coming seraph, flew.
A form impalpable of lustre clear
Enveloped Adam's spirit, beautiful
As that fair thought which the creative mind
In model imaged for the form of Man,
When, from the sacred earth of Paradise,
Fresh from his Maker's hand, youthful he sprung.
With radiant smile, which o'er his beaming brow
Celestial light diffused, Adam drew near,
And earnest spoke. "Hail, gracious messenger!
While I thy lofty mission heard, my soul
In joy was rapt. May I then view the form
Of manhood by the Savior worn, that form
Of mercy, in whose meek disguise he deigns
My fallen race to save! Show me the trace,
O seraph, of my Savior's earthly path:
My eye with awe shall view the distant track.
But may the first of sinners tread the spot
Whence the Messiah raised his face to heaven
And swore to ransom man? Maternal earth,
How do I sigh once more to visit thee!
I, thy first habitant! Thy barren fields
By God's dread curse defaced, where now in garb
Of frail mortality, such earthly frame

As in the dust I left, the Savior walks,
Would lovelier meet mine eyes than thy bright plains,
Thou long-lost Paradise!» Adam here paused.
To whom the seraph: «I will speak thy wish
To the Redeemer: should his will divine
Grant thy petition, he will summon thee
His lowliest humiliation to behold.»
  Now had the angelic host all quitted heaven,
Spreading to distant spheres their separate flight.
Gabriel alone descended to the earth,
Which by the neighboring stars, as each rolled by
Its splendid orb, was hailed with joyful shouts.
The salutations glad reached Gabriel's ear
In silver tones:—«Queen of the scattered worlds!
Object of universal gaze! Bright spot,
Again selected for the theatre
Of God's high presence! Blest spectatress thou
Of his Messiah's work of mystery!»
Thus sung the spheres; and through the concave vast
Angelic voices echoed back the sounds.
Gabriel exulting heard, and swift in flight
Reached earth's dim surface. O'er her silent vales
Refreshing coolness and deep slumber hung
Yet undisturbed; dark clouds of mist still lay
Heaped heavily upon her mountain-tops.
Through the surrounding gloom Gabriel advanced
In search of the Redeemer. Deep within
A narrow cleft which rent the forked height
Of sacred Olivet, oppressed by thought
The Savior sleeping lay; a jutting rock
His resting-place. With reverence Gabriel viewed
His tranquil slumber, and in wonder gazed
On that hid majesty which man's frail form,
By union with the Godhead, had acquired.
Still on the Savior's face the traces beamed
Of grace and love; the smile of mercy there
Still lingered visible; still in his eye
A tear of pity hung. But faintly showed
Those outward tokens of his soul, now sunk
In sleep profound. So lies the blooming earth
In eve's soft twilight veiled; her beauteous face,
Scarce recognized, so meets the inquiring eye
Of some close-hovering seraph, while aloft
In the yet lonely sky, the evening star

Shoots her pale radiance, calling from his bower
The contemplative sage. After long pause,
Gabriel thus softly cried:—"O Thou, whose eye
Omniscient searches heaven! who hear'st my words,
Though wrapped in sleep thy mortal body lies!
I have fulfilled thy mission. While my course
Returning I pursued, a fervent prayer
Adam implored me to convey. Thy face,
O gracious Savior, he on earth would see!
Now must I hasten, by Jehovah sent
On glorious ministration. Be ye hushed,
All living creatures! Every moment's space
Of this swift-flying time, while here yet lies
The world's Creator, dearer must ye deem
Than ages passed in duteous zeal for man.
Be still, ye whispering winds, as o'er this hill
Of lonely graves ye sweep, or sighing breathe
Your gentlest melodies! Descend, ye clouds,
And o'er these shades drop coolness and repose,
Deep and refreshing! Wave not your dark heads,
Ye tufted cedars! Cease, ye rustling groves,
While your Creator sleeps!" The seraph's voice
In whispers low now sunk; and swift he flew
To join th' assembled watchers, who, with him
(The faithful ministers of God's high will)
Governed with delegated rule the earth.
Thither he hastened to proclaim the approach
Of man's atonement by his Savior paid.

THE KORAN

BY HENRY PRESERVED SMITH

KORAN, the well-known sacred book of the Mohammedans. The word is variously written Coran, Kur'an, Qur'ân, or with the article, Alcoran, Al-Koran, El-Qur'ân. It is derived from a word meaning to chant, to recite, or to read aloud, especially as an act of Divine service. Mohammed borrowed the word and the idea from the preceding revealed religions, both of which made the liturgical reading of their Scriptures a prominent part of public worship. A single composition or chapter is called a Koran (x. 16), and the whole body of revelations is the Koran. In one instance (xv. 91) the word Koran is made to cover the whole body of revealed books, including the Old and New Testaments as well as the book of Mohammed.

The Koran is perhaps the most widely read book in the world. It is the text-book in all Mohammedan schools. All Moslems know large parts of it by heart. Devout Moslems read it through once a month. Portions of it are recited in the five daily prayers, and the recitation of the whole book is a meritorious work frequently performed at solemn or festival anniversaries. What Arabic science there is, has the Koran as its object; and the ambition of every devout Moslem student is to apprehend the divine philosophy which it is supposed to contain.

There is no reasonable doubt that the Koran is the work of Mohammed. Its parts were published by him at intervals during the more than twenty years of his activity as prophet. It is not clear that all were immediately put on record, but the Prophet encouraged his followers to commit them to heart. Some, however, were written down on whatever material came to hand; for we are told that when a collection of the whole was made, the parts were found « on leaves of the palm, on white stones and the shoulder-blades of sheep and camels, and in the breasts of men.» This essential work of collection was done soon after the Prophet's death, by his amanuensis, Zaid Ibn Thabit, at the command of the Caliph Abu Bekr. A few years later, as divergent copies were circulated, the Caliph Othman ordered a standard text to be made by three learned men; and when this was completed, other copies were made to conform to it. This *received text* has been transmitted without substantial variation to our own time, and probably represents correctly the work of Mohammed. No insinuation against its accuracy was ever uttered by the surviving comrades of the Prophet.

The Koran consists of chapters, each of which is called a *Sura*. They vary in length from a single line to many pages.* There is reason to think that the longer ones are made by putting together compositions originally published at different times. In these chapters, unity of thought or plan is difficult to discover. The only principle of arrangement for the book as a whole was to put the longest Suras first and the shortest last: this from the second Sura on,—the first place was given to the brief prayer called the Fatiha.

Mohammed disclaimed the title of poet. His earliest compositions, however, have a certain rhythmic form; the verses being short, with three or four accented syllables. All the verses of a single revelation rhyme, and a change in the rhyme indicates a transition to a new composition. The later chapters are also in rhyme; but as the verses are much longer, the poetic effect is lost.

The fragmentary character of the Suras, and the lack of plan in the arrangement of the book as a whole, throw great obstacles in the way of the reader. Moreover, as is the case in many early books, much is only obscurely expressed because the author expected to supply something by his own action in delivery. It is of the first importance, therefore, to bring the various revelations into connection with the life of Mohammed. Some help is given us here by the Traditions; but for the most part we are dependent on internal evidence. It is evident at the first glance that the shorter Suras are rhapsodic in character; gushes of emotion, coming from a man under religious excitement. The longer compositions, on the other hand, are prosaic, the result of reflection, frequently commonplace or trivial. With this general criterion, and with the help of tradition, we can separate roughly three periods of composition.

1. Those Suras which constitute the earliest group come last in the arrangement of the received text. In them Mohammed appears as a preacher of new truth. Himself much impressed by the doctrine of the unity of God, he professes it fervently while protesting against the idolatry of his countrymen. In the intensity of his emotion, he strengthens his asseverations by oaths of strange import; as in the following (Sura 100):—

"By the galloping panting troops,
That strike fire from the rocks,
That make their attack at the dawn,

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* The longest fills twenty-three pages of Flügel's Arabic text; the shortest occupies less than the tenth part of a single page.

Whose feet raise a cloud of dust!
Verily, man is ungrateful to his Lord!
Himself must testify this.
Strong only in the love of earthly good!
Doth he not know that when what is in the
tombs is brought forth,
And what is in the breasts is brought to light,
On that day their Lord will know concerning them?»

As is indicated at the close of this Sura, the coming Judgment is a prominent thought of the Prophet at this period. It is in fact alluded to in nearly every chapter, and is described in language closely approaching the Biblical pictures of the Day of Jehovah. The earth will shake violently and deliver up its dead; the mountains will be reduced to dust, or become like wool; the moon will be rent in twain; men and demons will be summoned to an account. After this, the good will be welcomed to gardens in which flow perennial streams, while the wicked will be consigned to the flame. These predictions form the staple of the revelations of this period, as any one will readily convince himself by reading from the seventy-third Sura onward through the book. The repetitions show no great fertility of imagination on the part of the author.

2. As Mohammed continued to preach, he discovered that his mere announcement was not taken seriously by his hearers. They refused to give up their false gods, and they scoffed at the idea of a Judgment. He found it necessary to argue with them and to instruct them. His argument was simply a more extended description of the character of God, with an appeal to his power as shown in nature. An example is the following (xiii. 10, ff.):—

«God is the Knower of the secret and of the manifest, the Great, the Exalted. It is the same to him whether one speak in secret or speak openly; whether one conceal himself in the night or go abroad in the day. Each man has companions before and behind, who watch him by the command of God. . . . He it is who shows you the lightning, an object of fear and yet of desire, and who brings up the heavy-laden clouds. The thunder chants his praise; the angels also, moved by fear of him. He sends the thunderbolts and strikes whom he will. Yet men dispute concerning God, though he is mighty in power. To him sincere prayer is to be made, and those who pray to another than to him shall receive no answer, more than one who stretches out his hand to the water to bring it to his mouth, when he is not within reach of it. The prayer of the unbelievers is only a going astray. Yet to God whatever is in heaven or on earth bows down willingly or unwillingly—even the shadows morning and evening.»

In this same connection we find the argument from nature—where God is described as sending down the rain which fills the streams;

and in general we may say that the power and goodness of God in creation and providence are a favorite theme.

For the historical material which he uses in this period, Mohammed depends mainly on the Bible. He does not refuse stories from other sources, as Arabic tradition. Whatever he uses he molds to his own purpose so palpably that we do not need to read between the lines. He has a scheme of history, according to which every epoch has had a prophet to preach the unity of God. The prophet has made a few converts, but the mass of his people have been unbelieving. The result has been a judgment of God upon the people, in which all perish except the prophet and his followers. Noah and Moses are favorite characters, because they can be fitted so easily into this scheme. They are therefore brought into prominence a number of times. So is Abraham, because he was the first of the true believers. The destruction of Sodom and of the Arab tribes (of which tradition tells) readily enforces the same lesson. Whatever the narrative may be, we hear the voice of Mohammed warning and rebuking — whether the ostensible person be Noah or Abraham or Moses. There is nowhere any interest in history for its own sake. The only exception is the story of Joseph, where it almost seems as if the beauty of the Biblical narrative had made the Prophet forget his main purpose.

It is impossible to quote here from this material. From the literary point of view it has little interest, both because of the prominence of the purpose and because of its repetitions. Not only are the same stories repeated,— they are interlarded with stereotyped phrases which cover the author's barrenness of thought, or relieve his embarrassment in the matter of rhyme.

3. With the emigration to Medina, Mohammed's circumstances were entirely changed. He had been the proscribed preacher of a persecuted sect. He now became the civil ruler as well as the religious leader of a devoted band of followers. The state of the community was such that this soon made him an autocrat over a growing State. His thought was necessarily turned to matters of public policy. He knew no distinction between State and church. The Koran embodied the decrees of the civil ruler as well as the oracles of the revealer of truth. Hence the third period shows a predominance of legislative matter. The division of the booty, the treatment of captives and renegades, the penalties for wrongs inflicted by the believers on each other, measures to be taken for the common defense — all these receive attention. The lesson of the victory at Bedr is set forth for the encouragement of believers, and the mortification of the defeat at Ohod is made to teach the danger of disobedience. Even the personal affairs of the Prophet are treated in the Koran, and God is made to rebuke the Bedawin for rude conduct, to scold

Mohammed's wives for their quarrels, to exculpate Ayesha when assailed by slander, and to give the Prophet a dispensation from the law imposed on other Moslems. All this is of great interest for the historian and for the student of comparative law; but it has no place in literature.

The Arabs affirm that the style of the Koran is perfection itself. Mohammed himself challenged men and demons to produce anything like it. As an article of faith, this cannot be shaken by criticism. And it must be admitted that from its position as the Book of God, the Koran has been a model for Arabic authors. In this respect its importance is parallel to that of Luther's Bible, or to that of the Authorized English Version. It fixed a standard, and is therefore a classic.

The foreigner may hesitate to contradict the consensus of Arabic opinion; but he can hardly fail to see that, judged by the best models of the world's literature, the Koran has many shortcomings. The compositions are without plan. There is rarely an ordered sequence of thought. The author often labors to express what he has to say. Stock phrases are used to relieve the lack of fluency. Monotonous repetitions of the same story testify to lack of invention. There are passages of great beauty and force, but they make up only a small part of the whole. Mohammed was not a master of style.

The translation of Sale, which has been published in numerous editions, is still regarded as the best. Rodwell in his translation (1861) attempts to arrange the Suras in chronological order. The reader may be referred also to the article ‹Mohammedanism› in the ‹Encyclopædia Britannica› (Vol. xvi., pages 597 ff.) and the titles ‹Muhammed› and ‹Qur'an› in Hughes's ‹Dictionary of Islam.›

Henry Preserved Smith.

SELECTIONS FROM THE KORAN

Translation of E. H. Palmer in ‹The Sacred Books of the East›

THE OPENING CHAPTER

IN THE name of the merciful and compassionate God.

Praise belongs to God, the Lord of the worlds, the merciful, the compassionate, the ruler of the Day of Judgment! Thee we serve and thee we ask for aid. Guide us in the right path, the path of those thou art gracious to; not of those thou art wroth with, nor of those who err.

The Chapter of the Night

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God.
By the night when it veils!
And the day when it is displayed!
And by what created male and female!
Verily, your efforts are diverse!
But as for him who gives alms and fears God,
And believes in the best,
We will send him easily to ease!
But as for him who is niggardly,
And longs for wealth,
And calls the good a lie,
We will send him easily to difficulty!
And his wealth shall not avail him
When he falls down [into hell]!
Verily it is for us to guide;
And verily, ours are the hereafter and the former life!
And I have warned you of a fire that flames!

None shall broil thereon but the most wretched, who says it is a lie and turns his back.

But the pious shall be kept away from it—he who gives his wealth in alms, and who gives no favor to any one for the sake of reward, but only craving the face of his Lord the most High; in the end he shall be well pleased!

The Chapter of the Dawn

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God.
By the dawn and ten nights!
And the single and the double!
And the night when it travels on!
Is there in that an oath for a man of common-sense?

Hast thou not seen how thy Lord did with Ad?—with Iram of the columns? the like of which has not been created in the land?

And Tharmud when they hewed the stones in the valley?

And Pharaoh of the stakes?

Who were outrageous in the land, and did multiply wickedness therein, and thy Lord poured out upon them the scourge of torment.

Verily, thy Lord is on a watch-tower! and as for man, whenever his Lord tries him and honors him and grants him favor, then he says, «My Lord has honored me;» but whenever he tries him and doles out to him his subsistence, then he says, «My Lord despises me!»

Nay, but ye do not honor the orphan, nor do ye urge each other to feed the poor, and ye devouring the inheritance [of the weak] with a general devouring, and ye love wealth with a complete love!

Nay, when the earth is crushed to pieces, and thy Lord comes with the angels, rank on rank, and hell is brought on that day, —on that day shall man be reminded! but how shall he have a reminder?

He will say, «Would that I had something forward for my life!»

But on that day no one shall be tormented with a torment like his, and no one shall be bound with bonds like his!

O thou comforted soul! return unto thy Lord well pleased and well pleased with!

And enter amongst my servants and enter my Paradise!

THE CHAPTER OF THE MOST HIGH

IN THE name of the merciful and compassionate God.

Celebrate the name of thy Lord most High, who created and fashioned, and who decreed and guided, and who brings forth the pasture, and then makes it dusky stubble!

We shall make thee recite, and thou shalt not forget, save what God pleases. Verily, he knows the open and what is concealed; and we will send thee easily to ease: wherefore remind, for verily the reminder is useful.

But he who fears will be mindful: but the wretch will avoid it; he will broil on the great fire, and then therein shall neither die nor live!

Prosperous is he who purifies himself and remembers the name of his Lord and prays!

Nay, but yet prefer the life of this world, while the hereafter is better and more lasting.

Verily, this was in the books of yore,—the books of Abraham and Moses.

THE CHAPTER OF THE ZODIACAL SIGNS

IN THE name of the merciful and compassionate God.

By the heaven with its zodiacal signs!

And the promised day!

And the witness and the witnessed!

The fellows of the pit were slain;

And the fire with its kindling,

When they sat over it

And witnessed, that while, what they were doing with those who believed.

And they took not vengeance on them save for their belief in God, the mighty, the praiseworthy,

Who is the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth;

For God is witness over all!

Verily, those who make trial of the believers, men and women, and do not repent, for them is the torment of hell, and for them is the torment of the burning!

Verily, those who believe and act aright, for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow,—that is the great bliss!

Verily, the violence of thy Lord is keen!

Verily, he produces and returns, and he is the forgiving, the loving, the Lord of the glorious throne; the doer of what he will!

Has there come to thee the story of the hosts of Pharaoh and Tharmud?

Nay, those who misbelieve do say it is a lie; but God is behind them—encompassing!

Nay, it is a glorious Qur'an in a preserved tablet.

THE CHAPTER OF THE CLEAVING ASUNDER

IN THE name of the merciful and compassionate God.

When the heaven is cleft asunder,

And when the stars are scattered,

And when the seas gush together,

And when the tombs are turned upside down,

The soul shall know what it has sent on or kept back!

O man! what has seduced thee concerning thy generous Lord, who created thee and fashioned thee, and gave thee symmetry, and in what form he pleased composed thee?

Nay, but ye call the judgment a lie! but over you are guardians set,—noble, writing down! they know what ye do!

Verily, the righteous are in pleasure, and verily, the wicked are in hell: they shall broil therein upon the Judgment Day; nor shall they be absent therefrom!

And what shall make thee know what is Judgment Day? Again, what shall make thee know what is the Judgment Day? a day when no soul shall control aught for another; and the bidding on that day belongs to God!

THE CHAPTER OF THOSE SENT

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God.

By those sent in a series!

And by those who speed swiftly!

And by the dispensers abroad!

And by the separators apart!

And by those who instill the reminder, as an excuse or warning!

Verily, what ye are threatened with will surely happen!

And when the stars shall be erased!

And when the heaven shall be cleft!

And when the mountains be winnowed.

And when the Apostles shall have a time appointed for them!

For what day is the appointment made?

For the day of decision! and what shall make thee know what the decision is?

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

Have we not destroyed those of yore, and then followed them up with those of the latter day? Thus do we with sinners.

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

Did we not create you from contemptible water, and place it in a sure depository unto a certain decreed term? for we are able, and well able too!

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

Have we not made for them the earth to hold the living and the dead? and set thereon firm mountains reared aloft? and given you to drink water in streams?

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

Go off to that which ye did call a lie! Go off to the shadow of three columns, that shall not shade or avail against the flame!

Verily, it throws off sparks like towers,—as though they were yellow camels!

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

This is the day when they may not speak,—when they are not permitted to excuse themselves!

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

This is the day of decision! We have assembled you with those of yore: if ye have any stratagem, employ it now!

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

Verily, the pious are amid shades and springs and fruit such as they love.—"Eat and drink with good digestion, for that which ye have done!"

Verily, thus we do reward those who do well.

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

"Eat and enjoy yourselves for a little: verily, ye are sinners!"

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

And when it is said to them, Bow down, they bow not down.

Woe on that day for those who say it is a lie!

And in what new discourse after it will they believe?

The Chapter of the Ginn

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God.

Say, "I have been inspired that there listened a company of the ginn, and they said, 'We have heard a marvelous Qur'an that guides to the right direction; and we believe therein, and we join no one with our Lord, for verily, he—may the majesty of our Lord be exalted!—has taken to himself no consort nor son.

"'And verily, a fool amongst us spake against God wide of the mark!

"'And we thought that men and ginn would never speak a lie against God.

"'And there are persons amongst men who seek for refuge with persons amongst the ginn; but they increase them in their perverseness. And they thought, as ye thought, that God would not raise up any one from the dead.

"'But we touched the heavens and found them filled with a mighty guard and shooting stars; and we did sit in certain seats thereof to listen; but whoso of us listens now finds a shooting star for him on guard.

"'And verily, we know not whether evil be meant for those who are in the earth, or if their Lord means right by them.

"'And of us are some who are pious, and of us are some who are otherwise: we are in separate bands.

"'And we thought that we could not frustrate God in the earth, and could not frustrate him by flight.

"'But verily, when we heard the guidance we believed the rein, and he who believes in his Lord shall fear neither diminution nor loss.

"'And verily, of us are some who are Muslims, and of us some are trespassers: but those of us who are Muslims, they strive after right direction; and as for the trespassers, they are fuel for hell.

"'And if they will go right upon the way, we will irrigate them with copious water to try them thereby; and whoso turns from the remembrance of his Lord, He will drive him to severe torment.'"

And [say] that the mosques are God's, and that ye should not call any one with God, and that when God's servant stood up to pray, they called out to him and well-nigh crowded upon him. Say, "I only call upon my Lord, and I join no one with him."

Say, "Verily, I cannot control for you either harm or right direction."

Say, "Verily, as for me none can protect me against God, nor do I find any refuge beside him,—except delivering the message from God and his errands; and whoso rebels against God and his Apostle, verily for him is the fire of hell for them to dwell therein for ever and for aye!"

Until when they see what they are threatened with, then shall they surely know who is most weak at helping and fewest in numbers!

Say, "I know not if what ye are threatened with be nigh, or if my Lord will set it for a term. He knows the unseen, and he lets no one know his unseen save such people as he is well pleased with; for verily, he sends marching before him and behind him a guard!" That he may know that they have delivered the errands of the Lord; for he compasses what they have, and reckons everything by number.

THE CHAPTER OF THE KINGDOM

IN THE name of the merciful and compassionate God.

Blessed be He in whose hand is the kingdom, for he is mighty over all!

Who created death and life, to try you, which of you does best; for he is the mighty, the forgiving!

Who created seven heavens in stories: thou canst not see any discordance in the creation of the Merciful!

Why, look again! canst thou see a flaw? Then look twice!—thy look shall return to thee driven back and dulled!

And we have adorned the lower heaven with lamps, and set them to pelt the devils with; and we have prepared for them the torment of the blaze!

And for those who disbelieve in their Lord is the torment of hell, and an evil journey shall it be!

When they shall be cast therein they shall hear its braying as it boils—it will well-nigh burst for rage!

Whenever a troop of them is thrown in, its treasurers shall ask them, « Did not a warner come to you? »

They shall say, « Yea! a warner came to us, and we called him a liar, and said, ‹ God has not sent down aught: ye are but in great error. › »

And they shall say, « Had we but listened or had sense, we had not been amongst the fellows of the blaze! »

And they will confess their sins; but « Avaunt to the fellows of the blaze! »

Verily, those who fear their Lord in secret, for them is forgiveness and great hire!

Speak ye secretly or openly, verily, he knows the nature of men's breasts!

Ay! He knows who created! for he is the subtle, the well-aware!

He it is who made the earth flat for you: so walk in the spacious sides thereof and eat of his provision; for unto him the resurrection is!

Are ye sure that he who is in heaven will not cleave the earth with you, and that it then shall quake?

Or are ye sure that he who is in heaven will not send against you a heavy sand-storm, and that ye shall know how the warning was?

But those before them did call the Apostles liars, and what a change it was!

Or have they not looked at the birds above them expanding their wings or closing them?—none holds them in except the Merciful One; for he on everything doth look.

Or who is this who will be a host for you, to help you against the Merciful?—the misbelievers are only a delusion!

Or who is this who will provide you if he hold back his provision?

Nay, but they persist in perverseness and aversion!

Is he who walks upon his face more guided than he who walks upright upon a straight path?

Say, "It is he who produced you and made for you hearing and sight and hearts,"—little it is that ye give thanks.

Say, "It is he who sowed you in the earth, and unto him ye shall be gathered!"

They say, "When shall this treat be, if ye do speak the truth?"

Say, "The knowledge is only with God; and I am but a plain warner!"

And when they see it nigh, sorry shall be the faces of those who misbelieve; and it shall be said, "This is that for which you used to call!"

Say, "Have ye considered whether God destroy me and those with me, or whether we obtain mercy; yet who will protect the misbelievers from grievous torment?"

Say, "He is the Merciful; we believe in him, and upon him do we rely: and ye shall shortly know who it is that is in obvious error!"

Say, "Have ye considered if your waters on the morrow should have sunk, who is to bring you flowing water?"

THE CHAPTER OF THE ANT

IN THE name of the merciful and compassionate God.

T. S. Those are the signs of the Qur'an and the perspicuous Book; a guidance and glad tidings to the believers, who are steadfast at prayer, and give alms, and of the hereafter are sure: verily, those who believe not in the hereafter we have made seemly for them in works, and they shall wander blindly on!

These are they who shall have an evil torment, and they in the hereafter shall be those who must lose. Verily, thou dost meet with this Qur'an from the wise, the knowing One!

When Moses said to his people, «Verily, I perceive a fire, I will bring you therefrom news; or I will bring you a burning brand: haply ye may be warned.» But when he came to it, he was called to, «Blessed be he who is in the fire, and he who is about it! and celebrated be the praises of God, the Lord of the worlds! O Moses! verily I am God, the mighty wise: throw down thy staff!» and when he saw it quivering, as though it were a snake, he turned back fleeing and did not return. «O Moses! fear not: verily, as for me — apostles fear not with me; save only those who have done wrong and then substitute good for evil: for verily, I am forgiving, merciful! but put thy hand in thy bosom, it shall come forth white without hurt; — one of nine signs of Pharaoh and his people: verily, they are a people who act abominably.»

And when our signs come to them visibly, they said, «This is obvious sorcery!» and they gainsaid them, though their souls made sure of them, unjustly, haughtily; but behold what was the end of the evil-doers!

And we gave David and Solomon knowledge; and they both said, «Praise belongs to God, who hath preferred us over many of his servants who believe!»

And Solomon was David's heir; and said, «O ye folk! we have been taught the speech of birds, and we have been given everything: verily, this is an obvious grace!»

And assembled for Solomon were his hosts of the ginns and men and birds, and they were marshaled; until they came upon the valley of the ants. Said an ant, «O ye ants! go into your dwellings, that Solomon and his hosts crush you not while they do not perceive.»

And he smiled, laughing at her speech, and said, «O Lord! excite me to be thankful for thy favor, wherewith thou hast favored me and my parents, and to do righteousness which may please thee; and make me enter into thy mercy amongst thy righteous servants!»

And he reviewed the birds, and said, «How is it I see not the hoopoe? is he then amongst the absent? I will surely torment him with a severe torment; or I will surely slaughter him; or he shall bring me obvious authority.»

And he tarried not long, and said, « I have compassed what ye compassed not; for I bring you from Seba a sure information: verily, I found a woman ruling over them, and she was given all things, and she had a mighty throne; and I found her and her people adoring the sun instead of God, for Satan had made seemly to them their works, and turned them from the path, so that they are not guided. Will they not adore God, who brings forth the secrets of the heavens, and knows what they hide and what they manifest? God, there is no god but he, the Lord of the mighty throne.»

Said he, « We will see whether thou hast told the truth, or whether thou art of those who lie. Go with this my letter and throw it before them; then turn back away from them, and see what they return.»

Said she, « O ye chiefs! verily, a noble letter has been thrown before me. It is from Solomon, and verily it is, ‹ In the name of the merciful and compassionate God. Do not rise up against me, but come to me resigned! › » She said, « O ye chiefs! pronounce sentence for me in my affair. I never decide an affair until ye testify for me.»

They said, « We are endowed with strength, and endowed with keen violence: but the bidding is thine; see then what it is that thou wilt bid.»

She said, « Verily, kings when they enter a city despoil it, and make mighty ones of its people the meanest; thus it is they do! So verily I am going to send them a gift, and will wait to see with what the messenger will return.»

And when he came to Solomon, he said, « Do ye proffer me wealth, when what God has given me is better than what he has given you? nay, ye in your gifts rejoice! return to them, for we will surely come to them with hosts which they cannot confront; and we will surely drive them out therefrom mean and made small!»

Said he, « O chiefs! which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me resigned?»

Said a demon of the ginns, « I will bring thee it before thou canst rise up from thy place, for I therein am strong and faithful.»

He who had the knowledge of the book said, « I will bring it to thee before thy glance can turn.» And when he saw it settled down beside him, he said, "This is of my Lord's grace, and he may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful; and he who is grateful is only grateful for his own soul, and he who is ungrateful — verily, my Lord is rich and generous."

Said he, "Disguise for her the throne; let us see whether she is guided, or whether she is of those who are not guided." And when she came it was said, "Was thy throne like this?" She said, "It might be it;" and we were given knowledge before her, but we were resigned.

But that which she served beside God turned her away: verily, she was of the unbelieving people. And it was said to her, "Enter the court;" and when she saw it, she reckoned it to be an abyss of water, and she uncovered her legs. Said he, "Verily, it is a court paved with glass!" Said she, "My Lord! verily, I have wronged myself, but I am resigned with Solomon to God and the Lord of the worlds!"

And we sent unto Thamud their brother Zali'h, "Serve God;" but behold, they were two parties who contended!

Said he, "O my people! why do ye hasten on evil acts before good deeds? why do ye not ask forgiveness of God? haply ye may obtain mercy." They said, "We have taken an augury concerning thee and those who are with thee." Said he, "Your augury is in God's hands; nay, but ye are a people who are tried!"

And where there were in the city nine persons who despoiled land and did not right: Said they, "Swear to each other by God, we will surely fall upon him by night and on his people; then we will surely say unto his next of kin, "We witnessed not the destruction of his people, and we do surely tell the truth." And they plotted a plot, and we plotted a plot, that we destroyed them and their people altogether!

Thus are their homes overturned, for they were unjust; verily, in that is a sign to people who do know!

But we saved thus who believed and did fear.

And Lot when he said to his people, "Do ye approach an abominable sin while ye can see? do ye indeed approach men lustfully rather than women? nay, ye are a people who are ignorant." But the answer of his people was only to say, "Drive out Lot's family from your city! verily, they are a folk who would keep pure."

But we saved him and his family except his wife; her we destined to be of those who lingered: and we rained down upon them rain, and evil was the rain to those who were warned.

Say, « Praise belongs to God; and peace be upon his servants whom he has chosen! Is God best, or what they associate with him?» He who created the heavens and the earth; and sends down upon you from the heaven water: and we cause to grow therewith gardens fraught with beauty; ye could not cause the trees thereof to grow! Is there a god with God? Nay, but they are people who make peers with him! He who made the earth, settled and placed amongst it rivers; and placed upon it firm mountains; and placed between the two seas a barrier: is there a god with God? nay, but most of them know not! He who answers the distressed when he calls upon him and removes the evil; and makes you successors in the earth: is there a god with God? little is it that ye are mindful. He who guides you in the darkness of the land and of the sea; and who sends winds as glad tidings before his mercy: is there a god with God? exalted be God above what they associate with him. He who began the creation and then will make it return again; and who provides you from the heaven and the earth: is there a god with God? so bring your proofs if you do speak the truth!

Say, «None in the heavens or the earth know the unseen save only God; but they perceived not when they shall be raised!»—nay, but their knowledge attains to somewhat of the hereafter; nay, but they are in doubt concerning it! nay, but they are blind!

And those who disbelieved said, « What! when we have become dust and our fathers too, shall we indeed be brought forward? We were promised this, we and our fathers before us: this is nothing but old folks' tales!»

Say, « Journey on through the land and see how was the end of the sinners! and grieve not for them, and be not straitened at what they plot.»

They say, « When shall this treat be if ye do tell the truth?» Say, «It may be that there is pressing close behind you a part of what ye would hasten on!» But verily, thy Lord is full of grace to men, but most of them will not be thankful; and verily, thy Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they manifest; and there is no secret thing in the heaven or earth, save that it is in the perspicuous book!

Verily, this Qur'an relates to the people of Israel most of that whereon they do dispute; and verily, it is a guidance and a mercy to the believers. Verily, thy Lord decides between them by his judgment, for he is mighty, knowing. Rely thou then upon God: verily, thou art standing upon obvious truth. Verily, thou canst not make the dead hear, and thou canst not make the deaf to hear the call when they turn their back on thee; nor art thou a guide to the blind, out of their error: thou canst only make to hear such as believe in our signs, and such as are resigned.

And when the sentence falls upon them, we will bring forth a beast out of the earth that shall speak to them [and say] that « Men of our signs would not be sure.»

And the day when we will gather from every nation a troop who said our signs were lies; and they shall be marshaled until they come, and he will say, « Did ye say my signs were lies, when ye had compassed no knowledge thereof? or what is it that ye were doing?» and the sentence shall fall upon them for what they did wrong, and they shall not have speech.

Did they not see that we have made the night for them to rest in, and the day to see by? Verily, in that are signs to believe who believe.

And the day when the trumpet shall be blown and all who are in the heavens and earth shall be startled, save whom God pleases! and all shall come abjectly to him. And thou shalt see the mountains which thou dost deem solid, pass away like the passing of the clouds;—the work of God who orders all things: verily, he is well aware of what ye do!

He who brings a good deed shall have better than it; and from the alarm of that day they shall be safe: but those who bring an evil deed shall be thrown down upon their faces in the fire. Shall ye be rewarded save for what ye have done?

I am bidden to serve the Lord of this country who has made it sacred, and whose are all things; and I am bidden to be of those who are resigned, and to recite the Qur'an: and he who is guided, he is only guided for himself; and he who errs, say, « I am only one of those who warn!»

And say, « Praise be to God, he will show you his signs, and ye shall recognize them; for thy Lord is not heedless of what ye do!»

KARL THEODOR KÖRNER

(1791–1813)

No nobler or more inspiring figure has appeared in literary and martial annals than that of Theodor Körner, the youthful hero and bard of the German wars for freedom. The romantic melancholy which attaches to the memory of those who die so young is in Körner's case enhanced by the brilliancy of his literary achievements, and by his glorious death on the field of battle when he was not yet twenty-two. It would seem that the story of so short a span might soon be told; but into the last two years of this brief life were crowded a marvelous literary productivity and splendid martial deeds. Under the inspiration of a great time, Körner's genius, enthralled at first by Kotzebue and then elevated by Schiller, rose at last to independent heights, which have given him a place among the great poets of his native land.

KARL T. KÖRNER

Körner was born in Dresden, on September 23d, 1791. His father was Christian Gottfried Körner; who, although he produced nothing himself, yet occupies a high rank in the history of German literature. He was for twenty years the intimate friend and adviser of Schiller; and the correspondence between Goethe and Schiller shows the elder Körner to have been a high-minded man of unusual intellectual powers. Thus under home influences of the most favorable kind young Körner grew to manhood. He studied at Freiburg and at Leipzig; obliged to leave the latter university in consequence of a duel, he went to Berlin for a brief time, and in 1811 to Vienna, where his remarkable career may be said to have begun. A volume of immature poems had appeared the year before under the modestly chosen title of 'Knospen' (Buds); but in Vienna his genius seemed suddenly to expand into the full flower. He enjoyed the friendship of Wilhelm von Humboldt and Friedrich von Schlegel. His poet's soul received new inspiration from the love of Antonie Adamberger, to whom he became engaged. And now there came from his pen with astonishing rapidity, poems, prose tales, comedies, and tragedies. His dramas won instant and extraordinary success, and the poet found himself the centre of admiration at the Austrian capital. He had scarcely attained his majority when he was appointed poet of the Court Theatre. Of his comedies, several still hold the stage. His serious dramas evince high dramatic power and an unerring stage instinct, but they reveal also a lack of knowledge of the world. His tragedies are entirely in the rhetorical iambic style of Schiller, but they are filled with Schiller's idealism and ardor for the noble and the good. The greatest of his tragedies is 'Zriny,' and this play is still in the repertoire of all the larger German theatres. This glowing presentation of the heroic Hungarian general produced a profound effect, and brought to the surface that fervor of patriotism which had already begun to do its emancipating work in the oppressed lands of Germany.

But the final consecration of Körner's genius came with the summons of the Prussian king to rally to the liberation of the fatherland. With the fresh laurels of literary fame within his grasp, with a life of love and happiness before him, Körner deliberately went to die in his country's service, refusing to remain idly at home singing of the heroic deeds of others. He joined the famous Lützow Free Corps in 1813. Universally beloved by his comrades, he was elected to a lieutenancy by their unanimous vote and became the adjutant of the major. This enabled him to play a prominent part in the bold enterprises of that dreaded company. It was during these thrilling days that the martial and patriotic songs which make up the collection of 'Leier und Schwert' (Lyre and Sword) were composed. These, with the airs to which Carl Maria von Weber set them, became a powerful force in maintaining the martial spirit of Germany. In these songs Körner's genius finds its highest expression; they are among the most inspired patriotic utterances that German literature has to show. A few hours before his death on August 26th, 1813, he composed the fiery 'Song of the Sword.' He was reading it aloud in the woods where the troop was stationed when the signal to advance was given. The attack was begun, and near the village of Lützow Körner fell mortally wounded. Only a few days later one of Körner's friends, a noble and accomplished youth, rushed to his death in the forefront of battle with the words, «Körner, I follow thee!» This was the spirit with which he inspired his comrades; and with this same spirit his songs inspired the entire fatherland. Under an oak-tree in the village of Wöbbelin he lies buried, and an iron monument commemorates his twofold fame. Not his songs only, but the noble example of his life has made Körner a fine inspirational force. It was of him that Mrs. Hemans sang:—

«A song for the death day of the brave—
A song of pride!
The youth went down to a hero's grave
With the sword his pride!»

MY NATIVE LAND

WHERE is the minstrel's native land?—
Where sparks of noble soul flashed high,
Where garlands bloomed in Honor's eye,
Where manly bosoms glowed with joy,
Touched by Religion's altar brand,—
There *was* my native land!

Name me the minstrel's native land.—
Though now her sons lie slain in heaps,
Though, wounded and disgraced, she weeps,
Beneath her soil the freeman sleeps.
The land of oaks—the German land—
They *called* my native land!

Why weeps the minstrel's native land?—
To see her people's princes cower
Before the wrathful tyrant's power;
She weeps, that in the stormy hour
No soul at her high call will stand.
That grieves my native land!

Whom calls the minstrel's native land?—
She calls the voiceless gods; her cries
Like thunder-storms assail the skies;
She bids her sons, her freemen, rise;
On righteous Heaven's avenging hand
She calls—my native land!

What will the minstrel's native land?—
She'll crush the slaves of despot power,
Drive off the bloodhounds from her shore,
And suckle free-born sons once more,
Or lay them free beneath the sand:
That will my native land!

And hopes the minstrel's native land?—
She hopes—she hopes! Her cause is just.
Her faithful sons will wake—they must.
In God Most High she puts her trust;
On his great altar leans her hand,
And hopes—my native land!

Translation of C. T. Brooks.

PRAYER DURING THE BATTLE

FATHER, I call on thee!
Clouds from the thunder-voiced cannon enveil me,
Lightnings are flashing, death's thick darts assail me:
Ruler of battles, I call on thee!
Father, oh, lead thou me!

Father, oh, lead thou me!
Lead me to victory, or to death lead me;
With joy I accept what thou hast decreed me.
God, as thou wilt, so lead thou me!
God, I acknowledge thee!

God, I acknowledge thee!
Where, in still autumn, the sear leaf is falling,
Where peals the battle, its thunder appalling:
Fount of all grace, I acknowledge thee!
Father, oh, bless thou me!

Father, oh, bless thou me!
Into thy hand my soul I resign, Lord;
Deal as thou wilt with the life that is thine, Lord.
Living or dying, oh, bless thou me!
Father, I praise thy name!

Father, I praise thy name!
Not for earth's wealth or dominion contend we;
The holiest rights of the freeman defend we.
Victor or vanquished, praise I thee!
God, in thy name I trust!

God, in thy name I trust!
When in loud thunder my death-note is knelling,
When from my veins the red blood is welling,
God, in thy holy name I trust!
Father, I call on thee!

Translation of J. S. Blackie.

SUMMONS

My people, wake! The signal-fires are smoking;
Bright breaks the light of Freedom from the north;
'Tis time thy steel in foemen's hearts was reeking.
My people, wake! The signal-fires are smoking;
The fields are white: ye reapers, hasten forth!
The last, the highest hope lies in the sword;
Home to thy bleeding breast their lances strain;
Make way for Freedom! Let thy blood be poured,
To cleanse thy German land from every stain.

Ours is no war of which crowned heads are dreaming;
'Tis a crusade, a holy war we wage!
Faith, virtue, conscience, truth, and honor mourn;
These has the tyrant from thy bosom torn;
Thy Freedom's victory saves them from his rage.
The moanings of thy aged cry, «Awake!»
Thy homes in ashes curse the invading brood,
Thy daughters in disgrace for vengeance shriek,
The ghosts of slaughtered sons shriek wild for blood.

Break up the plowshare, let the chisel fall,
The lyre be hushed, the shuttle cease its play;
Forsake thy courts, leave giddy Pleasure's hall:
He in whose sight thy banners flutter, all,
Will see his people now in war's array.
For thou shalt build a mighty altar soon
In his eternal Freedom's morning sky;
With thy good sword shall every stone be hewn;
On heroes' graves the temple's base shall lie.

Ye maidens and ye wives, for whom the Lord
Of Hosts the dreadful sword hath never steeled,
When 'mid your spoilers' ranks we gladly leap,
And bare our bosoms to the strife, why weep
That you may not stand forth on glory's field?—
Before God's altar joyfully repair;
The pangs of anxious love your wounds must be;
To you He gives, in every heartfelt prayer,
The spirit's pure and bloodless victory.

Then pray that God would wake the slumbering fire,
And rouse his old heroic race to life;

And oh, as stern avenging spirits, call
The buried German martyrs, one and all,
As holy angels of the holy strife!
Spirit of Ferdinand, lead thou the van!
Louisa, faithful to thy spouse, be nigh!
And all ye shades of German heroes, on,
With us, with us, where'er our banners fly!

The might of Heaven is with us; Hell must cower:
On, valiant people! on! 'Tis Freedom's cry!
Thy heart beats high, high up thy old oaks tower:
Heed not thy hills of slain in victory's hour;
Plant Freedom's banner there to float on high.
And now, my people, when thou standest free,
Robed in the brightness of thy old renown,
Let not the faithful dead forgotten be,
And place upon our urn the oaken crown!

Translation of C. T. Brooks.

LÜTZOW'S WILD CHASE

What gleams from yon wood in the sunbeams' play?
Hark! hark! It sounds nearer and nearer;
It winds down the mountain in gloomy array,
And the blast of its trumpets is bringing dismay
To the soul of the manliest hearer.
Go, read it in each dark comrade's face—
«That is Lützow's wild and desperate chase.»

What glances so swiftly through forest, o'er fell,
From mountain to mountain flying?
In ambush like midnight it lies in the dell;
The hurrah rings, and the rifle's knell
Proclaims the French beadles are dying.
Go, read it in each dark hunter's face—
«That is Lützow's wild and desperate chase.»

Where the rich grapes glow and the Rhine waves roar,
The tyrant thought safely to hide him;
With the swiftness of lightning it flies to the shore,
Leaps in, and with sinewy arm swims o'er,
And springs to the bank beside him.
Go, read it in each dark swimmer's face—
«That is Lützow's wild and desperate chase.»

Why roars in yon valley the din of fight,
And broadswords tumultuously clashing?
Stern horsemen are battling with dreadful delight,
And the live spark of liberty, wakeful and bright,
In bloody-red flames is fast flashing.
Go, read it in each dark horseman's face—
«That is Lützow's wild and desperate chase.»

Lo, smiling farewell 'mid the foe's dying wail,
Who lies there with bare bosom streaming?
Death lays his hand on that young brow, pale;
But never shall one of those true hearts quail,
For the star of their country is beaming.
Go, read it in each pale, marble face—
«That *was* Lützow's wild and desperate chase!»

The wild, wild chase, and the German chase
'Gainst hangmen and tyrants, is ended.
Come then, ye who love us, wipe tears from each face,
For the country is free, and the morn dawns apace,
Though our forms in the grave be extended.
Children's children shall cry, as our story they trace—
«That *was* Lützow's wild and desperate chase.»

Translation of C. T. Brooks.

SWORD SONG

Sword, on my left side gleaming,
What means thy bright eye's beaming?
It makes my spirit dance
To see thy friendly glance.
Hurrah!

«A valiant rider bears me;
A freeborn German wears me:
That makes my eye so bright;
That is the sword's delight.»
Hurrah!

Yes, good sword, I *am* free,
And love thee heartily,
And clasp thee to my side
E'en as a plighted bride.
Hurrah!

«And I to thee, by Heaven,
My light steel life have given:
When shall the knot be tied?
When wilt thou take thy bride?»
Hurrah!

The trumpet's solemn warning
Shall hail the bridal morning.
When cannon-thunders wake,
Then my true love I take.
Hurrah!

«Oh, blessed, blessed meeting!
My heart is wildly beating:
Come, bridegroom, come for me;
My garland waiteth thee.»
Hurrah!

Why, in the scabbard rattle,
So wild, so fierce for battle?
What means this restless glow?
My sword, why clatter so?
Hurrah!

«Well may thy prisoner rattle;
My spirit yearns for battle:
Rider, 'tis war's wild glow
That makes me tremble so.»
Hurrah!

Stay in thy chamber near,
My love: what wilt thou here?
Still in thy chamber bide:
Soon, soon I take my bride.
Hurrah!

«Let me not longer wait:
Love's garden blooms in state
With roses bloody-red,
And many a bright death-bed.»
Hurrah!

Now, then, come forth, my bride;
Come forth, thou rider's pride!
Come out, my good sword, come,
Forth to thy father's home!
Hurrah!

"Oh, in the field to prance
The glorious wedding dance!
How in the sun's bright beams,
Bride-like the clear steel gleams!"
Hurrah!

Then forward, valiant fighters!
And forward, German riders!
And when the heart grows cold,
Let each his love enfold.
Hurrah!

Once on the left it hung,
And stolen glances flung;
Now clearly on your right
Doth God each fond bride plight.
Hurrah!

Then let your hot lips feel
That virgin cheek of steel;
One kiss — and woe betide
Him who forsakes the bride.
Hurrah!

Now let the loved one sing;
Now let the clear blade ring,
Till the bright sparks shall fly,
Heralds of victory!
Hurrah!

For hark! the trumpet's warning
Proclaims the marriage morning:
It dawns in festal pride;
Hurrah, thou Iron Bride!
Hurrah!

Translation of C. T. Brooks.

THE THREE STARS

There are three cheering stars of light
O'er life's dark path that shine;
And these fair orbs, so pure and bright,
Are song, and love, and wine!

For oh! the soul of song hath power
To charm the feeling heart,
To soothe the mourner's sternest hour,
And bid his griefs depart!

And wine can lend to song its mirth,
Can joys unwonted bring,
And paint this fair and lovely earth
In charms of deathless spring.

But thou, O love! of all the throng
Art fairest seen to shine;
For thou canst soothe the soul like song,
And cheer the heart like wine!

Then deign, fair orbs! to shed your ray
Along my path of gloom,
To guide me through life's lonely way,
And shine upon my tomb!

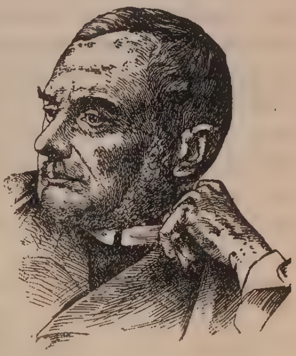
For oh! the song, the cup, the kiss
Can make the night divine;
Then blest be he who found the bliss
Of song, and love, and wine!

Translation of G. F. Richardson.

SIGISMUND KRASINSKI

(1812–1859)

Krasinski was one of the three great poets of Poland through whom the spirit of the submerged commonwealth found its fullest expression. The golden age of Poland's literature was coincident with the period of her deepest political humiliation, and every Polish poet was a Polish patriot. It was a literature of emigrants and exiles who found their poetic inspiration, and the mainspring of all endeavor, in the love of country and the hope of seeing her restored to her ancient greatness. In the trio of poets who represent this age Mickiewicz stands first, and by his side the Dioscuri Slowacki and Krasinski. Krasinski's position was a peculiar and difficult one. He was the heir of an old aristocratic family; his mother was a princess of the house of Radziwill, and he was brought up in the midst of feudal traditions. In his breast burned the purest patriotic fire, and merely to possess his works exposed a man to Siberia or death; and yet he was the only one of all the patriot poets that taught the philosophy of non-resistance and self-abnegation. With serene confidence he left the future in the hands of eternal justice, and insisted that the moral regeneration of Poland must precede her political re-establishment. In all his works this note of lofty morality is struck, and Christianity is put forward as the only reconciling power between conflicting forces.



Sigismund Krasinski

Sigismund Krasinski was born at Paris on February 19th, 1812. His father, Count Vincent Krasinski, was an adjutant of Napoleon's: when the hopes of Poland were shattered by the abdication of the Emperor, Krasinski, acting under orders from the Czar, returned with his family to Warsaw. Their home was the centre to which flocked all the eminent men in literary and political life. In this circle young Krasinski grew up, and the most loving care was bestowed upon his education. At the age of fourteen he wrote two novels in the style of his favorite author, Walter Scott; but his literary ambition was not encouraged, and he was destined for the law.

It was about this time that the crisis came which affected his whole career. The leaders who in 1825 conspired against the Russian government were brought to trial in Warsaw; and from all quarters of Europe the Polish members of the high tribunal hastened to the capital to give their votes for their compatriots. Count Krasinski was the only Pole that cast a vote in the Russian interest. The relations between father and son remained cordial, and the poet lived to see his father's appointment to the governorship of Poland received with approbation by his countrymen; but from the ignominy of his father's act he never recovered. His only reference to it is in the touching appeal to Poland with which his weird vision entitled ‹Temptation› ends. Krasinski's works were all published anonymously or under assumed names; and it was years before the admiring people learned the true name of the inspired teacher whom they revered as «the anonymous poet of Poland.»

Krasinski's frail state of health made long residence in the rigorous climate of his native land impossible, even had the political conditions been less unhappy. At Geneva in 1830 he met Mickiewicz, who exerted a powerful influence upon his genius, and turned his mind to poetry. In 1833 appeared his first poetic tale, ‹Agay Han›; and in the same year in Rome he wrote one of his greatest works, ‹Nieboska Komedya› (The Undivine Comedy). It is a symbolic poem in the dramatic form, and deals with the loftiest themes of social and spiritual life: the deviation from the path of plain duty in pursuit of a phantom ideal; the conflict between the old world of aristocracy and the new world of democracy, the futility of the triumph of one over the other; the ultimate salvation wrought by Christianity, through which reconciliation comes. The old aristocracy with its spiritual ideals is represented by Count Henry; the aims and inspirations of the materialized democracy are embodied in the character of Pancras. The monologue in which for a moment Pancras doubts the genuineness of his mission has been pronounced by Mickiewicz one of the great soliloquies of the world's literature. In this poem Krasinski's philosophy is brought before us in concrete forms, with sublime imagery and an insight into the future almost apocalyptic. It is said that after the disasters of 1846 Krasinski exclaimed, «Ah! why was I not a false prophet?»

The work which is regarded as the poet's highest achievement is the half epic, half dramatic poem, ‹Iridion.› It was written likewise in Rome and published in 1836. In glowing colors are contrasted the degeneracy of Rome under the Cæsars and the enthusiastic patriotism of the Greeks who are plotting to avenge subjugated Hellas. In conception and execution is displayed the same exalted originality that distinguished ‹The Undivine Comedy.› The solution also is the same:

Rome is pagan and the Greeks disregard Christianity, through which alone their salvation can be wrought. Poland is always before the poet's eye, and the application to her case is obvious. Krasinski was no lover of art for art's sake; poetry must have a living purpose, and in this spirit the Invocation to the Muse was written which opens 'The Undivine Comedy': «Thou ruinest wholly those who consecrate themselves, with all they are, to thee alone, who solely live the voices of thy glory.»

Krasinski also wrote several prose works of a symbolic character, but the prose is dithyrambic and impassioned. 'Pokusa' (Temptation) has already been mentioned: a strange vision of grief and hope with passages of thrilling power. 'Noc Letnia' (Summer Night) appeared in the same year, 1841. In 1843 Krasinski returned to verse; and in a series of beautiful canzone entitled 'Przedswit' (The Dawn) he sang the praises of the moral elements of the Polish past, and again proclaimed the necessity of reviving them. In the three famous 'Psalms of the Future' (1845 and 1848) Krasinski glorified the heroism of self-sacrifice and martyrdom. It was this that called forth the violent opposition of Slowacki and of the more ardent but less astute patriots. Slowacki denounced the 'Psalms' as «lyric cowardice»; but Krasinski's teachings sank deep into the heart of his distressed countrymen. The strange scene which took place at Warsaw in 1861 was typical of his influence. Infuriated by the sight of an unfurled Polish banner, the Russian troops fired upon the populace; and the Polish women and children and unarmed men bared their breasts to the bullets in a frenzy of patriotic self-sacrifice. It has been said of Krasinski that «he modified the character of an entire people.»

He died in Paris on February 23d, 1859; and with him was extinguished the last star in the triad of great Polish poets.

[All the following selections are made from 'The Undivine Comedy, and Other Poems.' Translated by Martha Walker Cook. Copyrighted 1875, by J. B. Lippincott & Co.]

INVOCATION

To Poetry

From 'The Undivine Comedy'

Stars circle round thy head; and at thy feet
Surges the sea, upon whose hurrying waves
A rainbow glides before thee, cleaving the clouds!
Whate'er thou look'st upon is thine! Coasts, ships,
Men, mountains, cities, all belong to thee!

Master of Heaven as earth, it seems as naught
Could equal thee in glory!

To ears which heed thy lays, thou givest joys,
Raptures ineffable! Thou weavest hearts
Together, then untwin'st them like a wreath,
As wild caprice may guide thy flame-lit fingers!
Thou forcest tears, then driest them with a smile;
Thou scar'st away the smile from paling lips,
Perhaps but for a moment, a few hours,
Perhaps for evermore!
But thou!—What dost thou *feel*, and what *create?*
A living stream of beauty flows through thee,
But Beauty thou art not! woe, woe, to thee!
The weeping child upon its mother's breast,
The field-flower knowing not its perfumed gift,
More merit have before the Lord than thou!
Whence com'st thou, fleeting shadow? to the Light
Still bearing witness, though thou know'st *it* not,
Hast never seen it, nor wilt ever see!
In anger or in mockery wert thou made?
So full of self-deceit that thou canst play
The angel to the moment when thou fall'st,
And crawlest like a reptile upon earth,
Stifled in mud, or feeding upon dust!
Thou and the woman have like origin!

Alas! thou sufferest too, although thy pangs
Bring naught to birth, nothing create, nor serve!
The groans of the unfortunate are weighed;
The lowest beggar's sighs counted in heaven,
Gathered and sung upon celestial harps:
But thy despair and sighs fall to the earth,
Where Satan gathers them; adds them with joy
To his own lies, illusions, mockeries!
The Lord will yet disown them, as they have
Ever disowned the Lord!
Not that I rise against thee, Poetry,—
Mother of Beauty, of ideal Life!
But I must pity him condemned to dwell
Within the limits of these whirling worlds,
In dying agonies, or yet to be
Doomed to sad memories, or prophecies,
Perchance remorse, or vague presentiments,—

Who gives himself to thee! for everywhere
Thou ruinest wholly those who consecrate
Themselves, with all they are, to thee alone,
Who solely live the voices of thy glory!

Blessed is he in whom thou mak'st thy home,
As God dwelt in the world, concealed, unknown,
But grand and mighty in each separate part:
The unseen God, before whom creatures bow,
And kneeling cry, «Behold Him! He is here!»
A guiding star, he bears thee on his brow,
And no unfaithful word will sever him
From thy true love! He will love men, and be
A man himself, encircled by his brothers!

From him who keeps not with thee perfect faith,
Betrays thee to the hour, or his own needs,
Devotes thee to man's perishable joys,
Painting the sensual with thy hues divine,—
Thou turn'st away thy face, while scattering
Perchance upon his brow some fading flowers,
Of which he strives to twine a funeral crown,
Spending his life to weave a wreath of death!
He and the woman have one origin!

Translation of Martha Walker Cook.

PANCRAS'S MONOLOGUE

From 'The Undivine Comedy'

Why does the boldness of this haughty Count
Still trouble me? Me, ruler of the millions!
Compared with mine, his force is but a shadow.
'Tis true, indeed, some hundreds of his serfs
Cling round him, as the dog stays by his master
In trusting confidence. That is sheer folly! . . .
But why do I so long to see this Count,
To subjugate him, win him to our side?
Has my clear spirit for the first time met
An equal? Does he bar its onward flight?
Arrest it in its full development?
The only obstacle before me now
Is his resistance: that I must o'ercome!
And then . . . and afterwards . . . and then . . .

O cunning intellect, canst thou deceive
Thyself as thou dost others? . . . Canst not?—No? . . .
O wretchedness! . . . Why dost thou doubt thyself?
Shame! . . . thou shouldst know thy power! Thou art the thought,
The reason of the people; Sovereign Lord!
Thou canst control the millions, make their wills,
With all their giant forces, one with thine!
The might of ALL incarnate is in thee;
Thou art authority and government!
What would be crime in others, is in thee
Glory and fame! Thou givest name and place
To men unknown; a voice, a faith to brutes
Almost deprived of mental, moral worth!
In thine own image thou hast made a world,
An age created,—art thyself its god!
And yet thou hesitatest,—doubt'st thyself?
No, no! a hundred times! . . . Thou art sublime!

Translation of Martha Walker Cook.

COUNT HENRY'S MONOLOGUE

From ‹The Undivine Comedy›

MIDNIGHT! It was at this same solemn hour,
Surrounded by like perils and like thoughts,
The latest Brutus met his Evil Genius;
And such an apparition I await!
A man who has no name, no ancestors,
Who has no guardian angel, faith, nor God,
Whose mission is destruction to the past,
Will yet—unless I'm strong enough to hurl
Him back into his primal nothingness—
Destroy society, its laws and faith;
Found a new era in the fate of man!
Such is the modern Cæsar I await! . . .

Eagle of glory, hear! Souls of my sires,
Inspire me with that fiery force which made
You rulers of the world. Oh, give to me
The lion heart which throbbed within your breasts!
Your austere majesty gird round my brow!
Rekindle in my soul your burning, blind,
Unconquerable faith in Christ, his Church,

The inspiration of your deeds on earth,
Your hopes in heaven! Light it again in me,
And I will scathe our foes with fire and sword;
Will conquer and destroy all who oppose me,
The myriads of the children of the dust.
I, the last son of hundred generations,
Sole heir of all your virtues, thoughts, and faults!

INTRODUCTION TO THE LAST ACT

From ‹The Undivine Comedy›

Perched like an eagle, high among the rocks,
Stands the old fortress, «Holy Trinity.»
Now from its bastions nothing can be seen,
To right, to left, in front, or in the rear,
A spectral image of that Deluge wrath
Which, as its wild waves rose to sweep o'er earth,
Once broke o'er these steep cliffs, these time-worn rocks.
No glimpses can be traced of vale beneath,
Buried in ghastly waves of ice-cold sea,
Wrapping it as the shroud winds round the dead.
No crimson rays of coming sun yet light
The clammy, pallid winding-sheet of foam.

Upon a bold and naked granite peak,
Above the spectral mist, the castle stands,
A solitary island in this sea.
Its bastions, parapets, and lofty towers
Built of the rock from which they soar, appear
During the lapse of ages to have grown
Out of its stony heart (as human breast
Springs from the centaur's back),— the giant work
Of days long past.
A single banner floats
Above the highest tower; it is the last,
The only Banner of the Cross on earth!

A shudder stirs and wakes the sleeping mist,
The bleak winds sigh, and silence rules no more;
The vapor surges, palpitates, and drifts,
In the first rays shot by the coming sun.
The breeze is chill; the very light seems frost,
Curdling the clouds that form and roll and drift

Above this tossing sea of fog and foam.
With Nature's tumult other sounds arise,
And human voices mingling with the storm
Articulate their wail, as it sweeps on.
Borne on and upward by the lifting waves
Of the cloud-surge, they break against the towers,
The castle's granite walls — voices of doom!

Long golden shafts transpierce the sea of foam;
The clinging shroud of mist is swiftly riven;
Through vaporous walls that line the spectral chasm
Are glimpses seen of deep abyss below.
How dark it looks athwart the precipice!
Myriads of heads in wild commotion surge;
The valley swarms with life, as ocean's sands
With writhing things that creep and twist and sting.
The sun! the sun! he mounts above the peaks!
The driven, tortured vapors rise in blood;
More and more clearly grow upon the eye
The threatening swarms fast gathering below.

The quivering mist rolls into crimson clouds;
It scales the craggy cliffs, and softly melts
Into the depths of infinite blue sky.
The valley glitters like a sea of light,
Throws back the sunshine in a dazzling glare;
For every hand is armed with sharpened blade,
And bayonets and points of steel flash fire;
Millions are pouring through the living depths,—
As numberless as they at last will throng
Into the valley of Jehoshaphat,
When called to answer on the Judgment Day.

Translation of Martha Walker Cook.

ARISTOCRACY'S LAST STAND

From 'The Undivine Comedy'

At last I see you, hated enemies!
With my whole power I trace your cunning plans,
Surround you with my scorn. No more we meet
Within the realm of idle words, of poetry,
But in the *real world* of deadly combat,
Sharp sword to sword, the rattling hail of bullets

Winged by the concentration of my hate!
No more with *single* arm and voice I meet you
The strength of *many* centres in my will.

It is a joyous thing to govern, rule,
Even were it solely at the price of death;
To feel myself the sovereign arbiter,
The master of so many wills and lives;
To see *there* at my feet my enemies
Leaping and howling at me from the abyss,
But all bereft of power to reach me here:
So like the damned, who vainly lift their heads
Toward Heaven!

I know . . . I know, a few hours more of time,
And I and thousands of yon craven wretches
Who have forgot their fathers and their God
Will be no more forever! Be it so!
At least I have a few days more of life,
To satiate myself with joy of combat—
The ecstasy of full command o'er others,
The giddy daring, struggle, victory, loss!
Thou, my last song, swell to a chant of triumph,
For death's the latest foe a man can conquer!

The sun sets fast behind the needled cliffs,
Sinks in a darksome cloud of threatening vapors;
His crimson rays light luridly the valley.—
Precursor of the bloody death before me,
I greet you with a fuller, gladder heart
Than I have e'er saluted ye, vain hopes
And promises of joy or blissful love!

Not through intrigue, through base or cunning skill,
Have I attained the aim of my desires;
But by a sudden bound I've leaped to fame,
As my persistent dreams told me I must.
Ruler o'er those but yesterday my equals,
Conqueror of death, since willingly I seek him,
I stand upon the brink;—eternal life, or sleep!

Translation of Martha Walker Cook.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY

From ‘The Undivine Comedy’

PANCRAS—The hour of rest has not yet struck for me!
The last sad sign of my last enemy
Marks the completion of but half my task.
Look at these spaces, these immensities,
Stretching between my thoughts and me.
Earth's deserts must be peopled, rocks removed,
Swamps drained, and mountains tunneled; trees hewn down;
Seas, lakes, and rivers everywhere connected,
Roads girdle earth, that produce circulate,
And commerce bind all hearts with links of gold.
Each man must own a portion of the soil;
Thought move on lightning wings rending old veils;
The living must outnumber all the hosts
Of those who've perished in this deadly strife;
Life and prosperity must fill the place
Of death and ruin,—ere our work of blood
Can be atoned for! Leonard, this must be done!
If we are not to inaugurate an age
Of social bliss, material ease and wealth,
Our deeds of havoc, devastation, woe,
Will have been worse than vain!
Leonard—The God of liberty will give us power
For these gigantic tasks!
Pancras— You speak of God!
Do you not see that it is crimson here?
Slippery with gore in which we stand knee-deep?
Whose gushing blood is this beneath our feet?
Naught is behind us save the castle court;
Whatever is, I see, and there is no one near.—
We are alone—and yet there surely stands
Another here between us!
Leonard—I can see nothing but this bloody corpse!
Pancras—The corpse of his old faithful servant—*dead!*
It is a *living spirit* haunts this spot!
This is *his* cap and belt; look at his arms;
There is the rock o'erhanging the abyss;
And on that spot it was his great heart broke!
Leonard—Pancras, how pale you grow!
Pancras— Do you not see it?
'Tis there! up there!

Leonard— I see a mass of clouds
Wild-drifting o'er the top of that steep rock
O'erhanging the abyss. How high they pile!
Now they turn crimson in the sunset rays.
Pancras—There is a fearful symbol burning there!
Leonard—Your sight deceives you.
Pancras— Where are now my people?
The millions who revered and who obeyed me?
Leonard—You hear their acclamations,—they await you.
Pancras, look not again on yon steep cliff,—
Your eyes die in their sockets as you gaze!
Pancras—Children and women often said that He
Would thus appear,—but on the last day only!
Leonard—Who? Where?
Pancras— Like a tall column there he stands,
In dazzling whiteness o'er yon precipice!
With both his hands he leans upon his cross,
As an avenger on his sword! Leonard,
His crown of thorns is interlaced with lightning—
Leonard—What is the matter?—Pancras, answer me!
Pancras—The dazzling flashes of his eyes are death!
Leonard—You're ghastly pale! Come, let us quit this spot!
Pancras—Oh!—Leonard, spread your hands and shade my eyes!
Press, press them till I see no more! Tear me away!
Oh, shield me from that look! It crushes me to dust!
Leonard [*placing his hands over the eyes*]—
Will it do thus?
Pancras— Your hands are like a phantom's!—
Powerless—with neither flesh nor bones!
Transparent as pure water, crystal, air,
They shut out nothing! I can see! still see!
Leonard—Your eyes die in their sockets! Lean on me!
Pancras—Can you not give me darkness? Darkness! Darkness!
He stands there motionless,—pierced with three nails,—
Three stars!—
His outstretched arms are lightning flashes!—Darkness!—
Leonara—I can see nothing! Master! Master!
Pancras— Darkness!
Leonard—Ho! citizens! Ho! democrats! aid! aid!
Pancras—VICISTI GALILÆE!

[*He falls dead.*]

Translation of Martha Walker Cook.

APPEAL TO POLAND

From ‘Temptation’

O Mother, many times murdered! When thou shalt waken from sleep, and again . . . feel thy youth returning upon thee, thou wilt remember thy long night of death, the terrible phantoms of thy protracted agonies. Weep not then, O mother! weep not for those who fell in glorious battle, nor for those who perished on alien soil: although their flesh was torn by the vulture and devoured by the wolf, they were still happy! Neither weep for those who died in the dark and silent dungeon underground by the hand of the executioner: though the dismal prison lamp was their only star, and the harsh words of the oppressor the last farewell they heard on earth, they too were happy!

But drop a tear, O Mother! one tear of tender pity for those who were deceived by thy murderers, misled by their tissues of glittering falsehood, blinded by misty veils woven of specious deceptions, when the command of the tyrant had no power to tear their true hearts from thee! Alas, Mother, these victims have suffered the most of all thy martyred children! Deceitful hopes, born but to die, like blades of naked steel forever pierced their breasts! Thousands of fierce combats, unknown to fame, were waging in their souls; combats fuller of bitter suffering than the bloody battles thundering on in the broad light of the sun, clashing with the gleam of steel, and booming with the roar of artillery. No glory shone on the dim paths of thy deceived sons; thy reproachful phantom walked ever beside them, as part of their own shadow! The glittering eye of the enemy lured them to the steep slopes of ice, down into the abyss of eternal snow; and at every step into the frozen depths, their tears fell fast for thee! They waited until their hearts withered in the misery of hope long deferred; until their hands sank in utter weariness; until they could no longer move their emaciated limbs in the fetters of their invisible chain; still conscious of life, they moved as living corpses with frozen hearts — alone amidst a hating people — alone even in the sanctuary of their own homes — alone forever on the face of the earth!

My Mother! When thou shalt live again in thy olden glory, shed a tear over their wretched fate, over the agony of agonies; and whisper upon their dark and silent graves the sublime word, Pardon.

Translation of Martha Walker Cook.

ÉDOUARD RENÉ LEFEBVRE LABOULAYE

(1811–1883)

If the literary pilgrim of two or three decades ago had desired to pay his respects to the most delightful French teller of fairy tales, he might have had to interrupt a session of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, to disturb the wise men of the Académie des Sciences Morales, to sit out a debate in the Assemblée Nationale, or to attend the leisure of the distinguished Professeur de Législation Comparée in the Collège de France; for all these institutions laid claim to the assistance of the profound scholar and philosophic statesman, Édouard Laboulaye.

Édouard Laboulaye

As, however, that eminent original mathematician and writer of many solid treatises on numbers, Charles Dodgson, is to be remembered as the happy author of 'Alice in Wonderland,' so the jurisconsult and political economist Laboulaye will live in grateful remembrance for his 'Contes Bleus' and 'Nouveaux Contes Bleus,'—stories of witch and elf, of fairy and enchanter,—rather than for his great services to learning.

He was born in Paris in 1811, under the First Empire, at the height of its deceptive splendor. His family was undistinguished, but intelligent and progressive. Educated in the usual French way, at school and college, he turned his mature thoughts first to business, setting up a type foundry with his brother Charles, who presently became an eminent inventor. The scientific bent which characterized the family inclined Édouard, however, to legal, historical, and philosophic investigations.

In his twenty-eighth year he made himself a distinguished name among scholars by the publication of his 'Histoire du Droit de Propriété Foncière en Occident' (History of Landed Property in Europe), a work crowned by the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres. The next year he brought out a remarkable book, 'Essai sur la Vie et les Ouvrages de Savigny' (The Life and Doctrines of Savigny); a memoir which not only introduced to French readers the great

German jurist and politician, but familiarized them with the new comparative method in historical investigation.

Three years later appeared a still more famous volume, 'Recherches sur la Condition Civile et Politique des Femmes depuis les Romains jusqu'à nos Jours (The Civil and Political Condition of Women from the time of the Romans). This was the first scientific inquiry into the causes and sources of the heavy legal disabilities of women, affording a basis for the first ameliorative legislation. A remarkable historical study, showing nice literary workmanship, it was crowned by the Academy of Moral Sciences for its ethical value.

Meantime the enthusiastic student had been admitted to the bar and begun to practice. He found time, however, to write various books on jurisprudence—'Roman Criminal Law,' 'Literary Property in France and England,' 'The State and its Limits,' with many minor treatises and studies. A Liberal by conviction, he set himself to propagate Liberal opinions under the repressive conditions of the Second Empire. Finding his ideal in the republican institutions of America, he wrote as a tract for the times 'A Political History of the United States.' During the Civil War his ardent friendship for this country prompted him to produce 'The United States and France,' an eloquent plea for the Union; and 'Paris in America,' a brilliant allegorical satire which passed through numberless editions. Indefatigable, he translated into French the works of William Ellery Channing, edited the biography and correspondence of Benjamin Franklin, wrote treatises on Germany and the Slavonic countries and on the political philosophy of Alexis de Tocqueville, poured forth reminiscences of travel, essays on slavery, religious liberty, constitutional republicanism, or political economy, and published anonymous satires on the government.

This then was the public-spirited citizen, the learned jurist and accomplished scholar, who yet found time to write three volumes of delightful fairy stories for the pleasure of his grandchildren. Of the first of these, 'Abdallah,' he once said, "This little volume cost me more than a year's study. There is not a detail in it that is not borrowed from some volume of Eastern travel; and I read the Koran twice through (a wearisome task) in order to extract therefrom a morality that might put Christians to the blush, though it is practiced by Arabs." In the same way he has filled his national fairy stories—Russian, Hungarian, Bohemian, Spanish—with local color and race characteristics. In many of them the brilliant censor who wrote 'Paris in America' and 'Prince Caniche' uses the grotesque and whimsical to veil a searching satire. But so delicate is his art that while the offenders may see themselves in the mirror he holds up to nature, the innocent read for the story alone. Full of wit, humor, and invention, finely imaginative, and written in a graceful and charming style, these fairy tales would alone have given their author a place among distinguished French writers. Unfortunately it is only the less important which are short enough to be cited in this volume.

When Laboulaye died, in 1883, the Republic for which he had labored lavished on him the tributes of her foremost scholars and statesmen. But the memorial he himself desired was the affectionate remembrance of the children to whom he had revealed an ideal world. «Experience will teach you only too quickly,» he said, addressing them, «that the truest and sweetest things in life are not those which we see, but those of which we dream. Then, in repeating my tales to the young folks whom I shall never see, perhaps you will find pleasure in talking to them of the old man who delighted in trying to amuse children. I desire no other fame. This immortality suffices me.»

THE TWELVE MONTHS

A BOHEMIAN TALE

From the ‹Fairy Book.› Translated by Mary L. Booth, and published by Harper & Brothers

THERE was once a woman who was left a widow with two children. The elder, who was only her stepdaughter, was named Dobrunka; the younger, who was as wicked as her mother, was called Katinka. The mother worshiped her daughter, but she hated Dobrunka simply because she was as beautiful as her sister was ugly. Dobrunka did not even know that she was pretty, and she could not understand why her stepmother flew into a rage at the mere sight of her. The poor child was obliged to do all the work of the house; she had to sweep, cook, wash, sew, spin, weave, cut the grass, and take care of the cow, while Katinka lived like a princess,—that is to say, did nothing.

Dobrunka worked with a good will, and took reproaches and blows with the gentleness of a lamb; but nothing soothed her stepmother, for every day added to the beauty of the elder sister and the ugliness of the younger. «They are growing up,» thought the mother, «and suitors will soon appear, who will refuse my daughter when they see this hateful Dobrunka, who grows beautiful on purpose to spite me. I must get rid of her, cost what it may.»

One day in the middle of January, Katinka took a fancy for some violets. She called Dobrunka, and said, «Go to the forest and bring me a bunch of violets, that I may put them in my bosom and enjoy their fragrance.»

«Oh, sister, what an idea!» answered Dobrunka: «as if there were any violets under the snow!»

«Hold your tongue, stupid fool,» returned her sister, «and do as I bid you. If you do not go to the forest and bring me back a bunch of violets, I will beat you to a jelly.» Upon this the mother took Dobrunka by the arm, put her out of the door, and drew the bolt on her.

The poor girl went to the forest weeping bitterly. Everything was covered with snow; there was not even a footpath. She lost her way and wandered about, till, famishing with hunger and perishing with cold, she entreated God to take her from this wretched life.

All at once she saw a light in the distance. She went on, climbing higher and higher, until at last she reached the top of a huge rock, upon which a great fire was built. Around the fire were twelve stones; and on each stone sat a motionless figure, wrapped in a large mantle, his head covered with a hood which fell over his eyes. Three of these mantles were white like the snow, three were green like the grass of the meadows, three were golden like the sheaves of ripe wheat, and three were purple like the grapes of the vine. These twelve figures, gazing at the fire in silence, were the Twelve Months of the year.

Dobrunka knew January by his long white beard. He was the only one that had a staff in his hand. The poor girl was terribly frightened. She drew near, saying in a timid voice, «My good sirs, please to let me warm myself by your fire: I am freezing with cold.»

January nodded his head. «Why have you come here, my child?» he asked. «What are you looking for?»

«I am looking for violets,» replied Dobrunka.

«This is not the season for them: there are no violets in the time of snow,» said January in his gruff voice.

«I know it,» replied Dobrunka sadly; «but my sister and mother will beat me to a jelly if I do not bring them some. My good sirs, please to tell me where I can find them.»

Old January rose, and turning to a young man in a green mantle, put his staff in his hand, and said to him, «Brother March, this is your business.»

March rose in turn, and stirred the fire with the staff, when behold! the flames rose, the snow melted, the buds put forth on the trees, the grass turned green under the bushes, the flowers peeped through the verdure, and the violets opened — it was spring.

«Make haste, my child, and gather your violets,» said March.

Dobrunka gathered a large bouquet, thanked the Twelve Months, and joyfully ran home. You can imagine the astonishment of Katinka and the stepmother. The fragrance of the violets filled the whole house.

«Where did you get these fine things?» asked Katinka in a disdainful voice.

«Up yonder, on the mountain,» answered her sister. «It looked like a great blue carpet under the bushes.»

Katinka put the bouquet in her bosom, and did not even thank the poor child.

The next morning the wicked sister, as she sat idling by the stove, took a fancy for some strawberries. «Go to the forest and bring me some strawberries,» said she to Dobrunka.

«O sister, what an idea! as if there were any strawberries under the snow!»

«Hold your tongue, stupid fool, and do as I bid you. If you don't go to the forest and bring me back a basket of strawberries, I will beat you to a jelly.»

The mother took Dobrunka by the arm, put her out of the door, and drew the bolt on her.

The poor girl returned to the forest, looking with all her eyes for the light that she had seen the day before. She was fortunate enough to spy it, and she reached the fire trembling and almost frozen. The Twelve Months were in their places, motionless and silent.

«My good sirs,» said Dobrunka, «please to let me warm myself by your fire: I am almost frozen with cold.»

«Why have you returned?» asked January. «What are you looking for?»

«I am looking for strawberries,» answered she.

«This is not the season for them,» returned January in his gruff voice: «there are no strawberries under the snow.»

«I know it,» replied Dobrunka sadly; «but my mother and sister will beat me to a jelly if I do not bring them some. My good sirs, please to tell me where I can find them.»

Old January rose, and turning to a man in a golden mantle, he put his staff in his hand, saying, «Brother June, this is your business.»

June rose in turn, and stirred the fire with the staff, when behold! the flames rose, the snow melted, the earth grew green, the trees were covered with leaves, the birds sang, and the flowers opened — it was summer. Thousands of little white stars enameled the turf, then turned to red strawberries; looking, in their green cups, like rubies set in emeralds.

«Make haste, my child, and gather your strawberries,» said June.

Dobrunka filled her apron, thanked the Twelve Months, and joyfully ran home. You may imagine the astonishment of Katinka and the stepmother. The fragrance of the strawberries filled the whole house.

«Where did you find these fine things?» asked Katinka in a disdainful voice.

«Up yonder on the mountain,» answered her sister; «there were so many of them that they looked like blood poured on the ground.»

Katinka and her mother devoured the strawberries without even thanking the poor child.

The third day the wicked sister took a fancy for some red apples. The same threats, the same insults, and the same violence followed. Dobrunka ran to the mountain, and was fortunate enough to find the Twelve Months warming themselves, motionless and silent.

«You here again, my child?» said old January, making room for her by the fire. Dobrunka told him with tears how, if she did not bring home some red apples, her mother and sister would beat her to death.

Old January repeated the ceremonies of the day before.

«Brother September,» said he to a gray-bearded man in a purple mantle, «this is your business.»

September rose and stirred the fire with the staff, when behold! the flames ascended, the snow melted, and the trees put forth a few yellow leaves, which fell one by one before the wind; — it was autumn. The only flowers were a few late pinks, daisies, and immortelles. Dobrunka saw but one thing, an apple-tree with its rosy fruit.

«Make haste, my child: shake the tree,» said September.

She shook it, and an apple fell; she shook it again, and a second apple followed.

"Make haste, Dobrunka, make haste home!" cried September in an imperious voice.

The good child thanked the Twelve Months, and joyfully ran home. You may imagine the astonishment of Katinka and the stepmother.

"Fresh apples in January! Where did you get these apples?" asked Katinka.

"Up yonder on the mountain: there is a tree there that is as red with them as a cherry-tree in July."

"Why did you bring only two? You ate the rest on the way."

"O sister, I did not touch them; I was only permitted to shake the tree twice, and but two apples fell."

"Begone, you fool!" cried Katinka, striking her sister, who ran away crying.

The wicked girl tasted one of the apples; she had never eaten anything so delicious in her life, neither had her mother. How they regretted not having any more!

"Mother," said Katinka, "give me my fur cloak. I will go to the forest and find the tree; and whether I am permitted or not, I will shake it so hard that all the apples will be ours."

The mother tried to stop her. A spoiled child listens to nothing. Katinka wrapped herself in her fur cloak, drew the hood over her head, and hastened to the forest.

Everything was covered with snow; there was not even a footpath. Katinka lost her way, but she pushed on, spurred by pride and covetousness. She spied a light in the distance. She climbed and climbed till she reached the place, and found the Twelve Months each seated on his stone, motionless and silent. Without asking their permission, she approached the fire.

"Why have you come here? What do you want? Where are you going?" asked old January gruffly.

"What matters it to you, old fool?" answered Katinka. "It is none of your business where I came from or whither I am going." She plunged into the forest. January frowned, and raised his staff above his head. In the twinkling of an eye the sky was overcast, the fire went out, the snow fell, and the wind blew. Katinka could not see the way before her. She lost herself, and vainly tried to retrace her steps. The snow fell and the wind blew. She called her mother, she cursed her sister, she cursed God. The snow fell and the wind blew. Katinka froze, her limbs stiffened, and she fell motionless. The snow still fell and the wind still blew.

The mother went without ceasing from the window to the door, and from the door to the window. The hours passed and Katinka did not return.

« I must go and look for my daughter, » said she. « The child has forgotten herself with those hateful apples. » She took her fur cloak and hood and hastened to the mountain. Everything was covered with snow; there was not even a footpath. She plunged into the forest, calling her daughter. The snow fell and the wind blew. She walked on with feverish anxiety, shouting at the top of her voice. The snow still fell and the wind still blew.

Dobrunka waited through the evening and the night, but no one returned. In the morning she took her wheel and spun a whole distaff full; there was still no news. « What can have happened? » said the good girl, weeping. The sun was shining through an icy mist, and the ground was covered with snow. Dobrunka prayed for her mother and sister. They did not return; and it was not till spring that a shepherd found the two corpses in the forest.

Dobrunka remained the sole mistress of the house, the cow, and the garden, to say nothing of a piece of meadow adjoining the house. But when a good and pretty girl has a field under her window, the next thing that follows is a young farmer, who offers her his heart and hand. Dobrunka was soon married. The Twelve Months did not abandon their child. More than once, when the north wind blew fearfully and the windows shook in their frames, old January stopped up all the crevices of the house with snow, so that the cold might not enter this peaceful abode.

Dobrunka lived to a good old age, always virtuous and happy, having, according to the proverb, winter at the door, summer in the barn, autumn in the cellar, and spring in the heart.

THE STORY OF COQUERICO

A SPANISH TALE

From the ‹Fairy Book.› Translated by Mary L. Booth, and published by Harper & Brothers

Once upon a time there was a handsome hen who lived like a great lady in the poultry-yard of a rich farmer, surrounded by a numerous family which clucked about her, and none of which clamored more loudly or picked up the corn faster with his beak than a poor little deformed and crippled chicken. This was precisely the one that the mother loved best. It is the way with all mothers: the weakest and most unsightly are always their favorites. This misshapen creature had but one eye, one wing, and one leg in good condition; it might have been thought that Solomon had executed his memorable sentence on Coquerico—for that was the name of the wretched chicken—and cut him in two with his famous sword. When a person is one-eyed, lame, and one-armed, he may reasonably be expected to be modest; but our Castilian ragamuffin was prouder than his father,—the best spurred, most elegant, bravest, and most gallant cock to be seen from Burgos to Madrid. He thought himself a phœnix of grace and beauty, and passed the best part of the day in admiring himself in the brook. If one of his brothers ran against him by accident, he abused him, called him envious and jealous, and risked his only remaining eye in battle; if the hens clucked on seeing him, he said it was to hide their spite because he did not condescend to look at them.

One day, when he was more puffed up with vanity than usual, he resolved no longer to remain in such a narrow sphere, but to go out into the world, where he would be better appreciated.

“My lady mother,” said he, “I am tired of Spain; I am going to Rome to see the Pope and cardinals.”

“What are you thinking of, my poor child!” cried his mother. “Who has put such a folly into your head? Never has one of our family been known to quit his country; and for this reason we are the honor of our race, and are proud of our genealogy. Where will you find a poultry-yard like this,—mulberry-trees to shade you, a white-washed hen-roost, a magnificent dunghill, worms and corn everywhere, brothers that love you, and three great dogs to guard you from the foxes? Do you not think that at Rome itself you will regret the ease and plenty of such a life?"

Coquerico shrugged his crippled wing in token of disdain. "You are a simple woman, my good mother," said he: "everything is accounted worthy of admiration by him who has never quitted his dunghill. But I have wit enough to see that my brothers have no ideas, and that my cousins are nothing but rustics. My genius is stifling in this hole; I wish to roam the world and seek my fortune."

"But, my son, have you never looked in the brook?" resumed the poor hen. "Don't you know that you lack an eye, a leg, and a wing? To make your fortune, you need the eyes of a fox, the legs of a spider, and the wings of a vulture. Once outside of these walls you are lost."

"My good mother," replied Coquerico, "when a hen hatches a duck, she is always frightened on seeing it run to the water. You know me no better. It is my nature to succeed by my wit and talent. I must have a public capable of appreciating the charms of my person; my place is not among inferior people."

"My son," said the hen, seeing all her counsels useless,—"my son, listen at least to your mother's last words. If you go to Rome, take care to avoid St. Peter's Church; the saint, it is said, dislikes cocks, especially when they crow. Shun, moreover, certain personages called cooks and scullions; you will know them by their paper caps, their tucked-up sleeves, and the great knives which they wear at their sides. They are licensed assassins, who track our steps without pity, and cut our throats without giving us time to cry mercy. And now my child," she added, raising her claw, "receive my blessing. May St. James, the patron saint of pilgrims, protect thee!"

Coquerico pretended not to see the tear that trembled in his mother's eye, nor did he trouble himself any more about his father, who bristled his plumage and seemed about to call him back. Without caring for those whom he left behind, he glided through the half-open door, and once outside, flapped his only wing and crowed three times to celebrate his freedom — "Cock-a-doodle-do!"

As he half flew, half hopped over the fields, he came to the bed of a brook which had been dried up by the sun In the middle of the sands, however, still trickled a tiny thread of water, so small that it was choked by a couple of dead leaves that had fallen into it.

« My friend,» exclaimed the streamlet at the sight of our traveler,—« my friend, you see my weakness; I have not even the strength to carry away these leaves which obstruct my passage, much less to make a circuit, so completely am I exhausted. With a stroke of your beak you can restore me to life. I am not an ingrate; if you oblige me, you may count on my gratitude the first rainy day, when the water from heaven shall have restored my strength.»

« You are jesting,» said Coquerico. « Do I look like one whose business it is to sweep the brooks? Apply to those of your own sort.» And with his sound leg he leaped across the streamlet.

« You will remember me when you least expect it,» murmured the brook, but with so feeble a voice that it was lost on the proud cock.

A little farther on, Coquerico saw the wind lying breathless on the ground.

« Dear Coquerico, come to my aid,» it cried: « here on earth we should help each other. You see to what I am reduced by the heat of the day; I, who in former times uprooted the olive-trees and lashed the waves to frenzy, lie here well-nigh slain by the dog-star. I suffered myself to be lulled to sleep by the perfume of the roses with which I was playing; and lo! here I am, stretched almost lifeless upon the ground. If you will raise me a couple of inches with your beak and fan me a little with your wing, I shall have the strength to mount to yonder white clouds which I see in the distance, where I shall receive aid enough from my family to keep me alive till I gain fresh strength from the next whirlwind.»

« My lord,» answered the spiteful Coquerico, « your Excellency has more than once amused himself by playing tricks at my expense. It is not a week since your Lordship glided like a traitor behind me, and diverted himself by opening my tail like a fan and covering me with confusion in the face of nations. Have patience, therefore, my worthy friend: mockers always have their turn; it does them good to repent, and to learn to respect those whose birth, wit, and beauty should screen them from the jests of a fool.» And Coquerico, bristling his plumage, crowed three times in his shrillest voice and proudly strutted onward.

A little farther on he came to a newly mown field, where the farmers had piled up the weeds in order to burn them. Coquerico approached a smoking heap, hoping to find some stray kernels of corn, and saw a little flame which was charring the green stalks without being able to set them on fire.

«My good friend,» cried the flame to the new-comer, «you are just in time to save my life: I am dying for want of air. I cannot imagine what has become of my cousin the wind, who cares for nothing but his own amusement. Bring me a few dry straws to rekindle my strength, and you will not have obliged an ingrate.»

«Wait a moment,» said Coquerico, «and I will serve you as you deserve, insolent fellow that dares ask my help!» And behold! he leaped on the heap of dry weeds, and trampled it down till he smothered both flame and smoke; after which he exultingly shouted three times, «Cock-a-doodle-doo!» and flapped his wing, as if he had done a great deed.

Proudly strutting onward and crowing, Coquerico at last arrived at Rome, the place to which all roads lead. Scarcely had he reached the city when he hastened to the great church of St. Peter. Grand and beautiful as it was, he did not stop to admire it; but planting himself in front of the main entrance, where he looked like a fly among the great columns, he raised himself on tiptoe and began to shout, «Cock-a-doodle-doo!» only to enrage the saint and disobey his mother.

He had not yet ended his song when one of the Pope's guards, who chanced to hear him, laid hands on the insolent wretch who dared thus to insult the saint, and carried him home in order to roast him for supper.

«Quick!» said he to his wife on entering the house, «give me some boiling water: here is a sinner to be punished.»

«Pardon, pardon, Madam Water!» cried Coquerico. «O good and gentle water, the best and purest thing in the world, do not scald me, I pray you!»

«Did you have pity on me when I implored your aid, ungrateful wretch?» answered the water, boiling with indignation. And with a single gush it inundated him from head to foot, and left not a bit of down on his body.

The unhappy Coquerico stripped of all his feathers, the soldier took him and laid him on the gridiron.

«O fire, do not burn me!» cried he in an agony of terror. «O beautiful and brilliant fire, the brother of the sun and the cousin of the diamond, spare an unhappy creature; restrain thy ardor, and soften thy flame; do not roast me!»

«Did you have pity on me when I implored your aid, ungrateful wretch?» answered the fire; and fiercely blazing with anger, in an instant it burnt Coquerico to a coal.

The soldier, seeing his roast chicken in this deplorable condition, took him by the leg and threw him out of the window. The wind bore the unhappy fowl to a dunghill, where it left him for a moment.

«O wind,» murmured Coquerico, who still breathed, «O kindly zephyr, protecting breeze, behold me cured of my vain follies; let me rest on the paternal dunghill.»

«Let you rest!» roared the wind. «Wait, and I will teach you how I treat ingrates.» And with one blast it sent him so high in the air, that as he fell back he was transfixed by a steeple.

There St. Peter was awaiting him. With his own hand he nailed him to the highest steeple in Rome, where he is still shown to travelers. However high-placed he may be, all despise him because he turns with the slightest wind; black, dried up, stripped of his feathers, and beaten by the rain, he is no longer called Coquerico, but Weathercock: and thus expiates, and must expiate eternally, his disobedience, vanity, and wickedness.

JEAN DE LA BRUYÈRE

(1645–1696)

The great French satirist La Bruyère has left a comprehensive portrait gallery of his contemporaries, where one searches vainly for the brilliant collector himself. One feels his desire to entertain, almost hears his amused ironical laugh at human follies; but his presence is intangible. He never took the world cordially into confidence, and we know little now of his uneventful life. He was born at Paris, educated with the Oratorians, and then studied law; but when about twenty-eight he gave up practice, and bought a treasurership at Caen, which he sold again twelve years later. To his friend and admirer Bossuet may be attributed his literary success; for, recommended by him, he became in 1684 instructor in history to the young Duc de Bourbon, grandson of the famous Condé. He received a salary of a thousand crowns, and seems to have taught his charge a variety of subjects. The stormy Condés liked this genial quiet gentleman-teacher and his ready tact. They may have stormed sometimes, after their wont; but La Bruyère knew how to be amiable while preserving his own respect and winning theirs. When his pupil left him, to marry the daughter of Louis XIV. and Madame de Montespan, he was asked to stay on as gentleman-in-waiting; and did so until his death of apoplexy at the Hôtel Condé, when only fifty-one.

Jean de La Bruyère

With the Condés the witty bourgeois had every opportunity to gather material for his famous Characters. He was a keen observer, with the clear impartial vision possessed only by an unconcerned spectator. Though he knew the King and all the powerful noblemen of France, though he was familiar with every court intrigue, he must often have been made to feel that he was a recognized inferior. There was quiet malice in his outward respect for these men and women, and in the merciless analysis with which he exposed their misplaced pride and ridiculous foibles.

The ‹Characters› (Les Caractères), suggested as its name indicates by the work of Theophrastus, and partly modeled after it, appeared in 1687; and La Bruyère found his literary pastime, his solace to wounded vanity, winning an immediate success. It is said that he had offered to give the manuscript to a bookseller friend, the possible profits to become a dowry for his child. The hesitating bookseller finally printed it, and thus made a large fortune.

La Bruyère has definitely stated the purpose of his work: «Of the sixteen chapters which compose it, there are fifteen wholly employed in detecting the fallacy and absurdity to be found in the objects of human passions and inclinations, and in demolishing such obstacles as at first weaken, and afterwards extinguish, any knowledge of God in mankind: therefore these chapters are merely preparatory to the sixteenth and last, wherein atheism is attacked, and perhaps routed; wherein the proofs of a God, such at least as weak man is capable of receiving, are produced; wherein the providence of God is defended against the insults and complaints of free-thinkers.»

The continuity of the sixteen chapters is not very evident. Each begins with general moral reflections upon ‹Merit,› ‹Women,› the ‹Affections,› and similar subjects; and ends with a series of literary portraits. La Bruyère was not a profound psychologist, but a careful superficial observer, with a gift for witty description. Although he used fictitious names, the sketches were too like living originals to be mistaken. Naturally they caused resentment and personal enmities, which twice prevented his election to the Academy, finally achieved in 1693. Everybody read the ‹Characters,› charmed by the delicate, forceful style, and by the shrewd moral reasoning which enriched the language with wise sayings. Key after key appeared, identifying his personages; but La Bruyère repudiated them all, declaring that he had represented types, not copied individuals.

The influence of this early realist was very great. But for him Le Sage's famous novel ‹Gil Blas› might never have been written. He is said to have inspired the ‹Persian Letters› (Lettres Persanes) of Montesquieu. Translated into English as early as 1698, the ‹Characters› had a wide influence upon our literature. «There is no doubt,» says Saintsbury, «that the English essayists of the Queen Anne school modeled themselves upon it.»

Its success called forth many feeble imitations, among them ‹The Little La Bruyère, or Characters and Morals of Children of this Century›; and ‹The La Bruyère for Domestics,› by Madame de Genlis, besides a ‹La Bruyère for Boys› and a ‹La Bruyère for Girls.›

His other works — a translation of Theophrastus, and an unfinished work upon ‹Quietism,› materially altered by the Abbé du Pin, and published after La Bruyère's death — are not noteworthy. But the ‹Characters› still constitute a delightful model of style, and a wise and witty commentary on social life.

OF FASHION

From the ‹Characters›

It is very foolish, and betrays what a small mind we have, to allow fashion to sway us in everything that regards taste; in our way of living, our health, and our conscience. Game is out of fashion, and therefore insipid; and fashion forbids to cure a fever by bleeding. This long while it has also not been fashionable to depart this life shriven by Theotimus; now none but the common people are saved by his pious exhortations, and he has already beheld his successor.

To have a hobby is not to have a taste for what is good and beautiful, but for what is rare and singular and for what no one else can match; it is not to like things which are perfect, but those which are most sought after and fashionable. It is not an amusement, but a passion; and often so violent that in the meanness of its object it yields only to love and ambition. Neither is it a passion for everything scarce and in vogue, but only for some particular object which is rare and yet in fashion.

The lover of flowers has a garden in the suburbs, where he spends all his time from sunrise till sunset. You see him standing there, and would think he had taken root in the midst of his tulips before his « Solitaire »: he opens his eyes wide, rubs his hands, stoops down and looks closer at it; it never before seemed to him so handsome; he is in an ecstasy of joy, and leaves it to go to the « Orient,» then to the « Veuve,» from thence to the « Cloth of Gold,» on to the «Agatha,» and at last returns to the « Solitaire,» where he remains, is tired out, sits down, and forgets his dinner; he looks at the tulip and admires its shade, shape, color, sheen, and edges,—its beautiful form and calyx: but God and Nature are not in his thoughts, for they do not go beyond the bulb of his tulips, which he would not sell for a thousand crowns, though he will give it to you for nothing when tulips are no longer in fashion, and carnations are all the rage. This rational being, who has a soul and professes some religion, comes home tired and half starved, but very much pleased with his day's work: he has seen some tulips.

Talk to another of the healthy look of the crops, of a plentiful harvest, of a good vintage, and you will find he only cares for fruit, and understands not a single word you say. Then turn to figs and melons; tell him that this year the pear-trees are so heavily laden with fruit that the branches almost break, that there is abundance of peaches: and you address him in a language he completely ignores, and he will not answer you, for his sole hobby is plum-trees. Do not even speak to him of your plum-trees, for he is only fond of a certain kind, and laughs and sneers at the mention of any others; he takes you to his tree and cautiously gathers this exquisite plum, divides it, gives you one half, keeps the other himself, and exclaims, «How delicious! do you like it? is it not heavenly? You cannot find its equal anywhere;» and then his nostrils dilate, and he can hardly contain his joy and pride under an appearance of modesty. What a wonderful person, never enough praised and admired, whose name will be handed down to future ages! Let me look at his mien and shape whilst he is still in the land of the living, that I may study the features and the countenance of a man who, alone amongst mortals, is the happy possessor of such a plum.

Visit a third, and he will talk to you about his brother collectors, but especially of Diognetes. He admits that he admires him, but that he understands him less than ever. «Perhaps you imagine,» he continues, «that he endeavors to learn something of his medals, and considers them speaking evidences of certain facts that have happened,—fixed and unquestionable monuments of ancient history. If you do, you are wholly wrong. Perhaps you think that all the trouble he takes to become master of a medallion with a certain head on it is because he will be delighted to possess an uninterrupted series of emperors. If you do, you are more hopelessly wrong than ever. Diognetes knows when a coin is worn, when the edges are rougher than they ought to be, or when it looks as if it had been newly struck. All the drawers of his cabinet are full, and there is only room for one coin; this vacancy so shocks him that in reality he spends all his property and literally devotes his whole lifetime to fill it.» . . .

Another man criticizes those people who make long voyages either through nervousness or to gratify their curiosity; who write no narrative or memoirs, and do not even keep a journal; who go to see, and see nothing, or forget what they have seen; who only wish to get a look at towers or steeples they never saw before, and to cross other rivers than the Seine or the Loire; who leave their own country merely to return again, and like to be absent, so that one day it may be said they have come from afar. So far this critic is right and is worth listening to.

But when he adds that books are more instructive than traveling, and gives me to understand he has a library, I wish to see it. I call on this gentleman, and at the very foot of the stairs I almost faint with the smell of the russia-leather bindings of his books. In vain he shouts in my ears, to encourage me, that they are all with gilt edges and hand-tooled, that they are the best editions,—and he names some of them, one after another,—and that his library is full of them, except a few places painted so carefully that everybody takes them for shelves and real books and is deceived. He also informs me that he never reads, nor sets foot in this library, and now only accompanies me to oblige me. I thank him for his politeness, but feel as he does on the subject, and would not like to visit the tan-pit which he calls a library.

Some people immoderately thirst after knowledge, and are unwilling to ignore any branch of it, so they study them all and master none; they are fonder of knowing much than of knowing some things well, and had rather be superficial smatterers in several sciences than be well and thoroughly acquainted with one. They everywhere meet with some person who enlightens and corrects them; they are deceived by their idle curiosity, and often, after very long and painful efforts, can but just extricate themselves from the grossest ignorance.

Other people have a master-key to all sciences, but never enter there; they spend their lives in trying to decipher the Eastern and Northern languages, those of both the Indies, of the two Poles, nay, the language spoken in the moon itself. The most useless idioms, the oddest and most hieroglyphical-looking characters, are just those which awaken their passion and induce them to study; they pity those persons who ingenuously content themselves with knowing their own language, or at most the Greek and Latin tongues. Such men read all historians and know nothing of history; they run through all books, but are not the wiser for any; they are absolutely ignorant of all facts and principles, but they possess as abundant a store and garner-house of words and phrases as can well be imagined, which weighs them down, and with which they overload their memory, whilst their mind remains a blank. . . .

Who can describe all the different kinds of hobbies? . . .

A fashionable person is like a certain blue flower which grows wild in the fields, chokes the corn, spoils the crops, and takes up the room of something better; it has no beauty nor value but what is owing to a momentary caprice, which dies out almost as soon as sprung up. To-day it is all the rage, and the ladies are decked with it; to-morrow it is neglected and left to the common herd.

A person of merit, on the contrary, is a flower we do not describe by its color, but call by its name,—which we cultivate for its beauty or fragrance, such as a lily or a rose; one of the charms of nature: one of those things which beautify the world, belonging to all times, admired and popular for centuries, valued by our fathers, and by us in imitation of them, and not at all harmed by the dislike or antipathy of a few. . . .

Every hour in itself, and in respect to us, is unique; when once it is gone, it is entirely lost, and millions of ages will not bring it back again; days, months, and years are swallowed up and irrevocably lost in the abyss of time; time itself shall be destroyed; it is but a point in the immense space of eternity, and will be erased. There are several slight and frivolous periods of time which are unstable, pass away, and may be called fashions: such as grandeur, favor, riches, power, authority, independence, pleasure, joy, and superfluities. What will become of such fashions when time itself shall have disappeared? Virtue alone, now so little in fashion, will last longer than time.

THE CHARACTER OF CYDIAS

From the ‹Characters›

Ascanius is a sculptor, Hegio an iron-founder, Æschines a fuller, and Cydias [the poet Fontenelle] a wit, for that is his trade. He has a signboard, a shop, work that is ordered, and journeymen who work under him; he cannot possibly let you have those stanzas he has promised you in less than a month, unless he breaks his word with Dosithea, who has engaged him to write an elegy; he has also an idyl on the loom which is for Crantor, who presses him for it, and has promised him a liberal reward. You can have whatever you like—prose or verse, for he is just as good in one as in the other. If you want a letter of condolence, or one on some person's absence, he will write them: he has them even ready-made; step into his warehouse, and you may pick and choose. Cydias has a friend who has nothing else to do but to promise to certain people a long time beforehand that the great man will come to them, and who finally introduces him in some society as a man seldom to be met with and exquisite in conversation. Then, just as a vocalist sings or as a lute-player touches his instrument in a company where it has been expected, Cydias, after having coughed, puts back his ruffles, extends his hand, opens his fingers, and very gravely utters his over-refined thoughts and his sophisticated arguments. Unlike those persons whose principles agree, and who know that reason and truth are one and the same thing, and snatch the words out of one another's mouths to acquiesce in one another's sentiments, he never opens his mouth but to contradict: « I think,» he says graciously, «it is just the opposite of what you say;» or, «I am not at all of your opinion;» or else, « Formerly I was under the same delusion as you are now; but . . .»; and then he continues, « There are three things to be considered,» to which he adds a fourth. He is an insipid chatterer; no sooner has he obtained a footing into any society than he looks out for some ladies whom he can fascinate, before whom he can set forth his wit or his philosophy, and produce his rare conceptions: for whether he speaks or writes, he ought never to be suspected of saying what is true or false, sensible or ridiculous; his only care is not to express the same sentiments as some one else, and to differ from everybody. Therefore in conversation, he often waits till every one has given his opinion on some casual subject, or one which not seldom he has introduced himself, in order to utter dogmatically things which are perfectly new, but which he thinks decisive and unanswerable. He is, in a word, a compound of pedantry and formality, to be admired by cits and rustics; in whom, nevertheless, there is nothing great except the opinion he has of himself.

Translation of Henri Van Laun.

MADAME DE LA FAYETTE

(1634-1693)

In the history of French fiction the work of Madame de La Fayette marks the beginning of a new era. Her work is the first which relies for its interest upon the truth of the emotions. For the impossible romances of heroic gallantry to which Cervantes had already given the death-blow, and for the picaresque tales of adventure which were to find their chief exponent in Defoe, she substituted the novel in which the study of character and the analysis of motive were to be the main sources of interest. Her immediate successors in the next century were the Abbé Prévost in France and Samuel Richardson in England. She raised the tone of fiction by simplifying motives, by deepening the characterization, and by adhering more closely to the facts of history and to the truth of nature. To these improved methods of treatment was added a distinction of style, and a carefully chosen but direct and unassuming language. The work in which her finest qualities are exhibited in combination is the 'Princess of Clèves,' upon which two centuries have placed the indelible mark of a great French classic. With this work the analytical novel of modern times may be said to have had its origin; and if the texture of motives in the 'Princess of Clèves' seems thin in comparison with the complicated and closely woven web of 'Madame Bovary' or 'Middlemarch,' it must be remembered that Madame de La Fayette's book appeared thirty years before 'Gil Blas,' and nearly half a century before the time of the great English novelists.

MME. DE LA FAYETTE

Marie Madeleine Pioche de la Vergne was born in Paris in March 1634. Her brilliant qualities of mind were early displayed in the literary circle of the Hôtel Rambouillet; but after her marriage in 1655 to the Count de La Fayette, her own home became one of the chief literary centres of Paris. Madame de Sévigné, La Fontaine, and Segrais were her close friends; and after the early death of her husband she established an intimate friendship with the Duke de La

Rochefoucauld. Her character was highly estimable, though long misunderstood. She survived La Rochefoucauld by thirteen years, which she was reported to have devoted to a life of penance. In 1880 hitherto unpublished letters were brought to light, which show that during those years Madame de La Fayette continued to play an important rôle at court, and was active for good in many a court intrigue. She was sincerely attached to her friends, of a restless activity, honestly frank, and possessed of a keen understanding.

At the time when Madame de La Fayette began to write, women of talent and learning were in disrepute; ecclesiastics had denounced them; Molière had ridiculed them. Her first story, ‹The Princess of Montpensier,› appeared anonymously and made no stir. Her second, ‹Zayde,› bore the name of her friend Segrais, and immediately attracted attention. ‹The Princess of Clèves,› published in the spring of 1678, made a sensation. There was in this case no such close concealment of the authorship, but there was considerable mystification. Many believed the book to be the work of La Rochefoucauld. In one of her letters Madame de Scudéry wrote, «The book is an orphan disowned both by father and mother.» ‹The Princess of Clèves› was the first novel in literature that could be called the romance of a married woman. There can be no doubt that although the scene is laid at the court of Henry II., the heroine is Madame de La Fayette herself; the Prince de Clèves, the Count de La Fayette; and the Duke de Nemours, La Rochefoucauld. The inner workings of a woman's life are here portrayed with purity of feeling and faithfulness of observation. The Princess's confession to her husband of her love for another man is related without dramatic fervor, but with a graceful certainty of touch. Two other works require only passing mention: ‹The History of Henrietta of England,› published in 1720, and the ‹Mémoires of the Court of France,› published in 1731. It is the ‹Princess of Clèves› alone that renders Madame de La Fayette preeminent among the many brilliant women of France in the seventeenth century. «In order to produce it,» says her biographer, «there were needed a court and a country like the court and France of Louis XIV. Let us give greeting to these graces that we shall see no more; but since this flower is not yet faded, let us breathe its perfume which awakens in us the dreams of that brilliant time, and let us admire its undying freshness.»

Madame de La Fayette died in Paris on May 25th, 1693.

HUSBAND AND WIFE

From ‹The Princess of Clèves.› Copyright 1891, by Little, Brown & Co.

Monsieur felt very bad at not seeing Madame de Clèves again after the pleasant afternoon he had spent with her, which had so fired his hopes. His impatience to meet her once more left him no peace; so that when the King returned to Paris he determined to make a visit to his sister, the Duchess of Mercœur, who lived in the country not far from Coulommiers. He proposed to the Vidame to go with him; the latter gladly consented, to the delight of Monsieur de Nemours, who hoped to make sure of seeing Madame de Clèves by calling in company with the Vidame.

Madame de Mercœur was delighted to see them, and at once began to devise plans for their amusement. While they were deer-hunting, Monsieur de Nemours lost his way in the forest; and when he asked what road he should take, he was told that he was near Coulommiers. When he heard this word, «Coulommiers,» he at once, without thinking, without forming any plan, dashed off in that direction. He got once more into the forest, and followed such paths as seemed to him to lead to the castle. These paths led to a summer-house, which consisted of a large room with two closets: one opening on a flower-garden separated from the forest by a fence, and the other opening on one of the walks of the park. He entered the summer-house, and was about to stop and admire it, when he saw Monsieur and Madame de Clèves coming along the path, followed by a number of servants. Surprised at seeing Monsieur de Clèves, whom he had left with the King, his first impulse was to hide. He entered the closet near the flower-garden, with the intention of escaping by a door opening into the forest; but when he saw Madame de Clèves and her husband sitting in the summer-house, while their servants stayed in the park, whence they could not reach him without coming by Monsieur and Madame de Clèves, he could not resist the temptation to watch her, or overcome his curiosity to listen to her conversation with her husband, of whom he was more jealous than of any of his rivals.

He heard Monsieur de Clèves say to his wife: «But why don't you wish to return to Paris? What can keep you in the country? For some time you have had a taste for solitude which surprises me and pains me, because it keeps us apart. I find you in even lower spirits than usual, and I am afraid something distresses you."

"I have nothing on my mind," she answered with some embarrassment; "but the bustle of a court is so great, and our house is always so thronged, that it is impossible for mind and body not to be tired and to need rest."

"Rest," he answered, "is not needed by persons of your age. Neither at home nor at court do you get tired; and I should be rather inclined to fear that you are glad to get away from me."

"If you thought that, you would do me great injustice," she replied with ever growing embarrassment; "but I beg of you to leave me here. If you could stay too I should be very glad; provided you would stay alone, and did not care for the throng of people who almost never leave you."

"Ah, madame," exclaimed Monsieur de Clèves, "your air and your words show me that you have reasons for wishing to be alone which I don't know, and which I beg of you to tell me."

For a long time the prince besought her to tell him the reason, but in vain: and after she had refused in a way that only doubled his curiosity, she stood for some time silent with eyes cast down; then raising her eyes to his she said suddenly:—

"Don't compel me to confess something which I have often meant to tell you, but had not the strength. Only remember that prudence does not require that a woman of my age, who is mistress of her actions, should remain exposed to the temptations of the court."

"What is it you suggest, madame?" exclaimed Monsieur de Clèves. "I should not dare to say, for fear of offending you."

Madame de Clèves did not answer, and her silence confirming her husband's suspicions, he went on:—

"You are silent, and your silence tells me I am not mistaken."

"Well, sir," she answered, falling on her knees, "I am going to make you a confession such as no woman has ever made to her husband; the innocence of my actions and of my intentions gives me strength to do so. It is true that I have reasons for keeping aloof from the court, and I wish to avoid the perils that sometimes beset women of my age. I have never given the slightest sign of weakness; and I should never fear displaying any, if you would leave me free to withdraw from court, or if Madame de Chartres still lived to guide my actions. Whatever the dangers of the course I take, I pursue it with pleasure, in order to keep myself worthy of you. I beg your pardon a thousand times if my feelings offend you; at any rate I shall never offend you by my actions. Remember that to do what I am now doing requires more friendship and esteem for a husband than any one has ever had. Guide me, take pity on me, love me if you can."

All the time she was speaking, Monsieur de Clèves sat with his head in his hands; he was really beside himself, and did not once think of lifting his wife up. But when she had finished, and he looked down and saw her, her face wet with tears, and yet so beautiful, he thought he should die of grief. He kissed her, and helped her to her feet.

"Do you, madame, take pity on me," he said, "for I deserve it; and excuse me if in the first moments of a grief so poignant as mine I do not respond as I should to your appeal. You seem to me worthier of esteem and admiration than any woman that ever lived; but I also regard myself as the unhappiest of men. The first moment that I saw you, I was filled with love of you; neither your indifference to me nor the fact that you are my wife has cooled it: it still lives. I have never been able to make you love me, and I see that you fear you love another. And who, madame, is the happy man that inspires this fear? Since when has he charmed you? What has he done to please you? What was the road he took to your heart? I found some consolation for not having touched it, in the thought that it was beyond any one's reach; but another has succeeded where I have failed. I have all the jealousy of a husband and of a lover; but it is impossible to suffer as a husband after what you have told me. Your noble conduct makes me feel perfectly secure, and even consoles me as a lover. Your confidence and your sincerity are infinitely dear to me; you think well enough of me not to suppose that I shall take any unfair advantage of this confession. You are right, madame,—I shall not; and I shall not love you less. You make me happy by the greatest proof of fidelity that a woman ever gave her husband; but madame, go on and tell me who it is you are trying to avoid."

"I entreat you, do not ask me," she replied: "I have determined not to tell you, and I think that the more prudent course."

"Have no fear, madame," said Monsieur de Clèves: "I know the world too well to suppose that respect for a husband ever prevents men falling in love with his wife. He ought to hate those who do so, but without complaining; so once more, madame, I beg of you to tell me what I want to know."

"You would urge me in vain," she answered: "I have strength enough to keep back what I think I ought not to say. My avowal is not the result of weakness, and it requires more courage to confess this truth than to undertake to hide it."

Monsieur de Nemours lost not a single word of this conversation, and Madame de Clèves's last remark made him quite as jealous as it made her husband. He was himself so desperately in love with her that he supposed every one else was just as much so. It was true in fact that he had many rivals, but he imagined even more than there were; and he began to wonder whom Madame de Clèves could mean. He had often believed that she did not dislike him, and he had formed his opinion from things which seemed so slight that he could not imagine he had kindled a love so intense that it called for this desperate remedy. He was almost beside himself with excitement, and could not forgive Monsieur de Clèves for not insisting on knowing the name his wife was hiding.

Monsieur de Clèves, however, was doing his best to find it out; and after he had entreated her in vain, she said:—"It seems to me that you ought to be satisfied with my sincerity; do not ask me anything more, and do not give me reason to repent what I have just done. Content yourself with the assurance I give you that no one of my actions has betrayed my feelings, and that not a word has ever been said to me at which I could take offense."

"Ah, madame," Monsieur de Clèves suddenly exclaimed, "I cannot believe you! I remember your embarrassment the day your portrait was lost. You gave it away,—you gave away that portrait which was so dear to me, and belonged to me so legitimately. You could not hide your feelings: it is known that you are in love; your virtue has so far preserved you from the rest."

"Is it possible," the princess burst forth, "that you could suspect any misrepresentation in a confession like mine, which there was no ground for my making? Believe what I say: I purchase at a high price the confidence that I ask of you. I beg of you, believe that I did not give away the portrait; it is true that I saw it taken, but I did not wish to show that I saw it, lest I should be exposed to hearing things which no one had yet dared to say.»

«How then did you see his love?» asked Monsieur de Clèves. «What marks of love were given to you?»

«Spare me the mortification,» was her answer, «of repeating all the details which I am ashamed to have noticed, and have only convinced me of my weakness.»

«You are right, madame,» he said: «I am unjust. Deny me when I shall ask such things, but do not be angry if I ask them.»

At this moment some of the servants who were without came to tell Monsieur de Clèves that a gentleman had come with a command from the King that he should be in Paris that evening. Monsieur de Clèves was obliged to leave at once; and he could say to his wife nothing except that he begged her to return the next day, and besought her to believe that though he was sorely distressed, he felt for her an affection and esteem which ought to satisfy her.

When he had gone, and Madame de Clèves was alone and began to think of what she had done, she was so amazed that she could scarcely believe it true. She thought that she had wholly alienated her husband's love and esteem, and had thrown herself into an abyss from which escape was impossible. She asked herself why she had done this perilous thing, and she saw that she had stumbled into it without intention. The strangeness of such a confession, for which she knew no precedent, showed her all her danger.

But when she began to think that this remedy, violent as it was, was the only one that could protect her from Monsieur de Nemours, she felt that she could not regret it, and that she had not gone too far. She spent the whole night in uncertainty, anxiety, and fear; but at last she grew calm. She felt a vague satisfaction in having given this proof of fidelity to a husband who so well deserved it, who had such affection and esteem for her, and who had just shown these by the way in which he had received her avowal.

Meanwhile Monsieur de Nemours had left the place where he had overheard a conversation which touched him keenly, and had hastened into the forest. What Madame de Clèves had said about the portrait gave him new life, by showing him that it was he whom she did not hate. He first gave himself up to this joy;

but it was not of long duration, for he reflected that the same thing which showed him that he had touched the heart of Madame de Clèves ought to convince him that he would never receive any token of it, and that it was impossible to gain any influence over a woman who resorted to so strange a remedy. He felt, nevertheless, great pleasure in having brought her to this extremity. He felt a certain pride in making himself loved by a woman so different from all others of her sex,—in a word, he felt a hundred times happier and unhappier. Night came upon him in the forest, and he had great difficulty in finding the way back to Madame de Mercœur's. He reached there at daybreak. He found it very hard to explain what had delayed him; but he made the best excuses he could, and returned to Paris that same day with the Vidame.

Monsieur de Nemours was so full of his passion, and so surprised by what he had heard, that he committed a very common imprudence,—that of speaking in general terms of his own feelings, and of describing his own adventures under borrowed names. On his way back he turned the conversation to love: he spoke of the pleasure of being in love with a worthy woman; he mentioned the singular effects of this passion; and finally, not being able to keep to himself his astonishment at what Madame de Clèves had done, he told the whole story to the Vidame, without naming her and without saying that he had any part in it. But he manifested such warmth and admiration that the Vidame at once suspected that the story concerned the prince himself. He urged him strongly to acknowledge this; he said that he had long known that he nourished a violent passion, and that it was wrong not to trust in a man who had confided to him the secret of his life. Monsieur de Nemours was too much in love to acknowledge his love; he had always hidden it from the Vidame, though he loved him better than any man at court. He answered that one of his friends had told him this adventure, and had made him promise not to speak of it, and he besought him to keep his secret. The Vidame promised not to speak of it; nevertheless Monsieur de Nemours repented having told him.

Meanwhile, Monsieur de Clèves had gone to the King, his heart sick with a mortal wound. Never had a husband felt warmer love or higher respect for his wife. What he had heard had not lessened his respect, but this had assumed a new form. His most earnest desire was to know who had succeeded in pleasing her.

Monsieur de Nemours was the first to occur to him, as the most fascinating man at court, and the Chevalier de Guise and the Marshal of Saint-André as two men who had tried to please her and had paid her much attention; so that he decided it must be one of these three. He reached the Louvre, and the King took him into his study to tell him that he had chosen him to carry Madame to Spain; that he had thought that the prince would discharge this duty better than any one; and that no one would do so much credit to France as Madame de Clèves. Monsieur de Clèves accepted this appointment with due respect, and even looked upon it as something that would remove his wife from court without attracting any attention; but the date of their departure was still too remote to relieve his present embarrassment. He wrote at once to Madame de Clèves to tell her what the King had said, and added that he was very anxious that she should come to Paris. She returned in obedience to his request; and when they met, each found the other in the deepest gloom.

Monsieur de Clèves addressed her in the most honorable terms, and seemed well worthy of the confidence she had placed in him.

«I have no uneasiness about your conduct,» he said: «you have more strength and virtue than you think. It is not dread of the future that distresses me; I am only distressed at seeing that you have for another feelings that I have not been able to inspire in you.»

«I do not know how to answer you,» she said; «I am ready to die with shame when I speak to you. Spare me, I beg of you, these painful conversations. Regulate my conduct; let me see no one,—that is all I ask: but permit me never to speak of a thing which makes me seem so little worthy of you, and which I regard as so unworthy of me.»

«You are right, madame,» he answered: «I abuse your gentleness and your confidence. But do you too take some pity on the state into which you have cast me, and remember that whatever you have told me, you conceal from me a name which excites an unendurable curiosity. Still, I do not ask you to gratify it; but I must say that I believe the man I must envy to be the Marshal of Saint-André, the Duke of Nemours, or the Chevalier de Guise.»

«I shall not answer,» she said blushing, «and I shall give you no occasion for lessening or strengthening your suspicions;

but if you try to find out by watching me, you will surely make me so embarrassed that every one will notice it. In Heaven's name," she went on, "invent some illness, that I may see no one!"

"No, madame," he replied: "it would soon be found that it was not real: and moreover, I want to place my confidence in you alone; that is the course my heart recommends, and my reason too. In your present mood, by leaving you free, I protect you by a closer guard than I could persuade myself to set about you."

Monsieur de Clèves was right: the confidence he showed in his wife proved a stronger protection against Monsieur de Nemours, and inspired her to make austerer resolutions, than any form of constraint could have done. She went to the Louvre and visited the dauphiness as usual; but she avoided Monsieur de Nemours with so much care that she took away nearly all his happiness at thinking that she loved him. He saw nothing in her actions which did not prove the contrary. He was almost ready to believe that what he had heard was a dream, so unlikely did it appear. The only thing that assured him that he was not mistaken was the extreme sadness of Madame de Clèves, in spite of all her efforts to conceal it. Possibly kind words and glances would not have fanned Monsieur de Nemours's love as did this austere conduct.

One evening when Monsieur and Madame de Clèves were with the Queen, some one said that it was reported that the King was going to name another nobleman of the court to accompany Madame to Spain. Monsieur de Clèves fixed his eyes on his wife when the speaker added that it would be either the Chevalier de Guise or the Marshal of Saint-André. He noticed that she showed no agitation at either of these names, or at the mention of their joining the party. This led him to think that it was neither of these that she dreaded to see; and wishing to determine the matter, he went to the room where the King was. After a short absence, he returned to his wife and whispered to her that he had just learned that it would be Monsieur de Nemours who would go with them to Spain.

The name of Monsieur de Nemours, and the thought of seeing him every day during a long journey in her husband's presence, so agitated Madame de Clèves that she could not conceal it; and wishing to assign other reasons, she answered:—

"The choice of that gentleman will be very disagreeable for you: he will divide all the honors, and I think you ought to try to have some one else appointed."

"It is not love of glory, madame," said Monsieur de Clèves, "that makes you dread that Monsieur de Nemours should come with me. Your regret tells me what another woman would have told by her delight. But do not be alarmed; what I have just told you is not true: I made it up to make sure of a thing which I had only too long inclined to believe." With these words he went away, not wishing by his presence to add to his wife's evident embarrassment.

At that moment Monsieur de Nemours entered, and at once noticed Madame de Clèves's condition. He went up to her, and said in a low voice that he respected her too much to ask what made her so thoughtful. His voice aroused her from her revery; and looking at him, without hearing what he said, full of her own thoughts and fearful that her husband would see him by her side, she said, "In Heaven's name leave me alone!"

"Alas! madame," he replied, "I leave you only too much alone. Of what can you complain? I do not dare to speak to you, or even to look at you; I never come near you without trembling. How have I brought such remark on myself, and why do you make me seem to have something to do with the depression in which I find you?"

Madame de Clèves deeply regretted that she had given Monsieur de Nemours an opportunity to speak to her more frankly than he had ever done. She left him without giving him any answer, and went home in a state of agitation such as she had never known. Her husband soon noticed this; he perceived that she was afraid lest he should speak to her about what had just happened. He followed her into her room and said to her:—

"Do not try to avoid me, madame; I shall say nothing that could displease you. I beg your pardon for surprising you as I did; I am sufficiently punished by what I learned. Monsieur de Nemours was the man whom I most feared. I see your danger: control yourself for your own sake, and if possible for mine. I do not ask this as your husband, but as a man all of whose happiness you make, and who feels for you a tenderer and stronger love than he whom your heart prefers."

Monsieur de Clèves nearly broke down at these last words, which he could hardly utter. His wife was much moved; and bursting into tears, she embraced him with a gentleness and a sorrow that almost brought him to the same condition. They remained for some time perfectly silent, and separated without having strength to utter a word.

Translated by Thomas Sergeant Perry.

JEAN DE LAFONTAINE.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE

(1621–1695)

BY GEORGE McLEAN HARPER

AT THE court of Louis XIV. there once appeared a figure which clashed with the regularity and harmony of the scene. A tall, spare man, with a long nose, thin satirical lips, and kindly eyes, which could be sharp enough but were for the most part veiled by revery, wandered through the palace of Versailles and lingered half amused in the stately and unnatural gardens. Jean de La Fontaine, then in discredit as the author of certain licentious tales and the associate of malcontents, had come, rather sheepishly, at the instance of his friends, to present a volume of his fables to the King, of whose disfavor he was well aware. Though not quite clear as to the nature of his offense nor over-anxious for royal patronage, he was willing to purchase protection by an act of homage. He felt uncomfortable in his rôle of suitor, but played it with what grace and countenance he could. While conforming, with an odd mingling of ease and childish awkwardness, to the requirements of the situation, there was a fine, incredulous smile about the corners of his mouth as he bent the knee to the monarch whom under his breath he called Sire Lion,—feeling himself to be neither more nor less of a courtier than that handsome rascal, the Fox. The glitter of ceremony failed to dazzle him; and although he manifestly tried to be interested in the regal pageant, he was not much impressed. When he had finished his harangue, he found he had forgotten to bring the book which was to have been its excuse, and he absent-mindedly left in the carriage that bore him away, the purse of gold with which his solicitations had been rewarded.

To the King and his elegant retinue he must have seemed a naughty, undisciplined child,—rustic, old-fashioned, irreverent, out of keeping with the world and the times. Yet he was in some ways the most real man there; certainly the most natural. He understood his world and his time profoundly, after his fashion, and was destined to interpret them to future generations. For if he never succeeded in pleasing the King or obtaining a royal pension, he was only too popular with many great lords and ladies, and knew most of the celebrities of Paris; and though his acquaintances would have been amused to hear that he possessed any moral superiority over them, he at least enjoyed a certain advantage of birth and breeding which enabled him to see things with clearer eyes than they.

No one can see clearly and judge with broad fairness in a society which represents to him the whole of life. One must come from another world to do this. And a large part of La Fontaine's past had been spent in a world as different as could be imagined from the artificial circumstances of a court, and his experience was well calculated to reduce them to a natural perspective. Other men, of remarkable penetration and unusual honesty, were aware of the evils of that reign,—so difficult to judge then, because so grand in outward seeming. La Rochefoucauld was letting fall, here and there, a maxim of concentrated bitterness; and Saint-Simon was rushing home from court every night to pour out, on endless paper, his righteous indignation against the crawling hypocrisy of bishops, the slander and place-hunting of lords, and the tainted ambition of ladies. But to neither of these observers did it all seem abnormal and ridiculous, as it did to La Fontaine. To him there was matter for eternal laughter in that perversion of nature which was called a court. Like Jupiter's monkey in his own fable, who replied to the elephant, astonished at the indifference of the gods to his size and importance, the complacent dreamer said, «Both small and great in their eyes are the same.» For him the gods were elsewhere,—divinities of groves and rivers, shaking the leaves of woodland birch and roadside poplar in the sunny Champagne country, and splashing, serenely unconcerned with mortal business, through the meandering Marne. And he laughed silently at the formal ugliness of Versailles horticulture, as the «vision of trees,» «the mist and the river, the hill and the shade,» rose before his mind. No less ludicrous must the King of France and his brilliant company of flatterers have sometimes appeared to him, when he reflected how exactly they and all their movements matched the life of village boors and gossips, or the more antique and undeviating ways of forest creatures, in bush and stream. For it was by intimacy with country scenes, peasant nature, and the primitive and changeless character of animals, that La Fontaine differed from the high society into which he had been allured, and was enabled to judge it. Like Benjamin Franklin a century later at the court of Louis XVI., he brought into an artificial circle the clear perceptions and the common-sense which are bred of familiarity with simple forms of life.

He was born July 8th, 1621, in the small town of Château-Thierry, which sits quietly beside the river Marne, in the heart of Champagne. The soil of that famous wine-growing country is light, and the sun shines fair, but without excessive heat. The beauty of the landscape is in the ordered green of its little vineyards, the bright red and blue of poppy and corn-flower in its winding meadows, which low chalk hills warmly enfold, treeless but gently outlined,—all these features perfect in detail, and the common charm their gracious harmony. There is no grandeur to uplift, no mystery to deepen the human spirit; neither is there fat abundance to make men dull. The native race is shrewd, witty, parsimonious, sober. They see clearly in the small concerns of their very limited lives, and are devoid of illusions and exciting fancies. The moral current is shallow, but sparkling and quick. The deep imaginings and awful pleasures of northern peoples are to them unknown. Mystery does not charm, but only irritates them. They have a weak sense for the supernatural or the abstract. Ridicule, rather than priest or Bible, is the guardian of their behavior; and the principles which regulate their conduct have long ago been coined into maxims and anecdotes and significant bywords, which pass down from generation to generation with accumulating force.

In this region La Fontaine's father and grandfather held the office of «master of streams and forests,» a government position in the proper filling of which a man would naturally become familiar with the country and its inhabitants. The family enjoyed consideration and some wealth. Jean, who must have been but a willful and indifferent scholar, received an education of which the principal traces in his works are a loving familiarity with the Latin poets, and a wide acquaintance with the racy and somewhat recondite narratives which constituted the undercurrent of French literature,—irregular, licentious, but undeniably congenial to the French spirit. He became deeply read in the popular tales of the Middle Ages,—satires, animal stories, and «moralities.» From these sources, and from several writers of the sixteenth century, particularly Rabelais and Marot, he obtained a fund of witty and sensual incidents; while his poetical imagery and much of his tenderer and purer sentiment were derived from Virgil and Ovid.

The son of an old family comfortably settled in a small country town is strongly tempted to idleness; because there come to him by birth that consideration and respect, and that freedom from financial concern, which are the usual objects of men's activity. La Fontaine was never very successful in resisting temptation of any kind, and it suited his nature to float indolently on the current of wealth and social regard which his more strenuous ancestors had accumulated. Nor was there lack of entertainment to enliven the smooth voyage; for he had neighbors to his liking,—not averse to playing for high stakes or drinking up to the limit of sobriety, and withal of a very ready wit. Unambitious, fond of easy company, absent-minded, given to receiving hospitality, which was offered freely in those days in French provincial towns, he drifted into middle age; allowing himself to be married by family arrangement and without love, and quietly accepting his father's office, which was resigned in his favor.

His life of hunting, reading, and convivial pleasure at Château-Thierry was diversified by frequent visits to Paris, where his compositions were a passport to the acquaintance not only of literary people, but of many rich and frivolous nobles. In 1654 he published an adaptation of the ‘Eunuchus’ of Terence, and at about this time his tales and epistles in verse began to circulate from hand to hand. He lived to deplore the harm the tales may have done, though he professed for his part to see no evil in them. They were based largely on Boccaccio and Rabelais; and represented woman's character especially in a way not creditable to their author, either as poet or as mere observer. It is true, however, that so far as the material of the tales is concerned, he accepted the disgusting inventions of his coarse masters without much change. Between 1657 and 1663 he was a frequent guest, and indeed a pensioner, of the rich and corrupt Fouquet, superintendent of finance. Several other poets also enjoyed the bounty of Fouquet at his magnificent country-seat, the palace of Vaux; but none on such strict terms of service as La Fontaine. He was at work for three years, with what frequent intervals of repose we can imagine, on a long eulogistic composition, ‘The Dream of Vaux’; and wrote besides many occasional pieces, in return for lavish hospitality. On Fouquet's fall in 1663, he sang with sincere regret the departed glories of the place, in his ‘Elegy of the Nymphs of Vaux.’

He would seem to have been now, for a moment, in helpless plight,—his private fortune well-nigh exhausted, and himself in disgrace with the government as a friend of the guilty superintendent. But he found no lack of patronage. One of Mazarin's nieces, the Duchess of Bouillon, then living in forced retirement at Château-Thierry, attracted him back to his birthplace; and through her connections at Paris he subsequently received a fresh start in town society. He had already become a friend of Molière, Racine, and Boileau. Spurred into action by their raillery,—for he was the eldest of the group, and the others, who were winning fame, called him a laggard,—he published in 1664 the first series of his versified tales. Like many of his steps, this was an innocent blunder, and led him to no honorable advantage. His reputation as the author of such compositions brought him into close relations with several notorious sets of libertines; and his life, which had never been consistent, now became a very complex tangle of good and bad. He neglected his wife, his son, his public duties. He lived in ease and self-indulgence.

He seemed occupied solely with the art of satisfying his own caprice and the depraved taste of a corrupt society.

But somehow the precious jewel which was in his head remained untarnished, and shone through at last; for after all he had not been idle, and was never worse than a willful child. He possessed the poet's eye, and it had been busy when his hands were folded. No such «master of streams and forests» ever lived. Not even Izaak Walton so well deserves the name. The trees of Champagne had small need to mourn the incompetence of their guardian, who has given them «a green and golden immortality» in his appeal to the woodman:—

«Leave axes, books, and picks,
Instruments of woe.
The scythe of Time, with deadlier tricks,
To line the borders of the Styx
Too soon will bring them low.»

In simplicity of heart, and profiting by his unbounded leisure, this wayward but still unspoiled man had followed a native instinct of observation, which had led him after many years into rare sympathy with the non-human denizens of the earth. His peculiar appreciation —half poetic feeling, half naturalist's instinct—of this underlying world, being put to the service of his very considerable philosophic bent, gave him that air which people remarked, of having come from another planet. As old age approached, there grew upon him the habit of judging men according to the large standard of comparison which his fellowship with animals and plants provided. And it came to be recognized as his unique distinction that he would be at all times collecting and applying these novel ideas. He was known to sit for half a day, missing his dinner and breaking all appointments, to watch a family of ants bury a dead fly. The ways of the wolf, the fears of the mouse, the ruminations of the ox, the ambitions of the bear, were more open to his understanding than men's politics. He loved the bright, smiling land of his birth; its limpid waters, its sunny vineyards, its frugal farms, where every egg was counted—sometimes, as he tells us, before it was laid. Waiting by green-mantled pools, peering to the brook's gray bottom, and wandering with bowed head on forest paths, where for a moment the fallow-deer stood in the flickering light and were gone,—he mused for months and years in happy indolence; and if by chance he undertook, of a winter's night, to turn into French verse a fable of Æsop or Phædrus, and unconsciously excelled his models, it was still all love-in-idleness to him, and in no wise work.

But there had to be labor enough in the end, for the task was complicated,—being the turning of old Greek and Latin fables, not only into the French language, but into the French spirit. Moreover, he exercised in this the most painstaking and thoughtful originality, by setting forth in them the results of his own observation and making a witty commentary on his own times. By his forty-eighth year there were enough of these little poems for a volume of one hundred and twenty-four fables, arranged in six books. Ten years later he published another collection, of five books. The fables excited such interest, and went so far to make amends for past license, that their author was elected a member of the Academy; but the King for a time opposed his admission, finally permitting it in 1684, with the remark, «You may receive La Fontaine at once: he has promised to behave.» There were more tales, however, and much loose conduct to atone for, when, during a serious illness in 1693, the old poet made a public and no doubt sincere confession of his sins. It is worthy of remark, as illustrating the peculiarly expansive and social character of the period, and perhaps also the racial conception of religion as a public exercise rather than an inward state, that a committee of literary men were deputed by the French Academy to witness this tardy profession of faith. The twelfth and last book of fables appeared shortly afterwards; and two years later he died, still young in heart. For nearly a generation he had been living on the hospitality of his friends at Paris — not basely, but with noble frankness, acknowledging his inability to provide for himself.

La Fontaine, it must be admitted, lacked some very essential qualities, while possessing other and unusual ones in notable abundance. Marriage was not sacred to him, though friendship was. He disliked children, though he loved dumb beasts. Throughout the latter half of his life he was dependent on others for a home; but in his soul he was free, and seldom praised his patrons except where self-interest fell in with affection. His tales are an unclean spot upon the century when French literature as a whole was most pure and dignified; but his fables, which far surpass them in artistic finish, in interest, in variety, are sound and clear and sweet. The truth is, this great man was always a child, with a child's fair purposes and untrained will. Instinct ruled him. Until almost the end of his life he was an irresponsible pagan.

But his failings were of the most amiable order; and they saved him from too great conformity to the artificial society of his time, which would have been the most deplorable failing of all. He never grew old nor worldly-wise; he never lost his sweet simplicity, nor succeeded, no matter how much he tried, in making those surrenders of the ideal by which we purchase what is termed success. To blame La Fontaine for being different from other men, even the best, would be to overlook the quality wherewith his very true and enduring

THE HOME OF LA FONTAINE

(*Paris, 1695*)

success was achieved. The ordered life of civilized communities had come to be taken for granted as necessarily the best possible condition, and of vastly more scope and meaning than the life of nature. Both in the conduct of his own affairs,—his childlike following of pleasure, his unsophisticated relish for what was natural,—and also by precept and illustration in his fables, La Fontaine suggested the broader basis and more complicated frame of things. If we are careful to exclude any idea of his entertaining a conscious intention to influence politics, it may safely be said that La Fontaine, by criticizing the monarch, the churchman, the noble, under the guise of lion, wolf, fox, bear, or cat, opened a little crack, which La Bruyère was to widen and Montesquieu to whistle through, until at last it gaped broad and let in the howling blasts of revolutionary eloquence.

To the same fondness for being his genuine self is due the high lyric quality of the fables,—an excellence which they alone, of all French poetry from Ronsard to André Chénier, possess in anything like abundance. We shall see the value of this distinction if we reflect that in the same interval England was graced with the songs and sonnets of Spenser, Raleigh, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Campion, Milton, Collins, Gray, and Burns,—to mention no more, and to draw somewhere a line that must perforce be arbitrary. The main effort of the seventeenth century in France being to enforce conformity to certain standards,—in other words, to produce typical rather than individual excellence,—there could be in her literature of that period no such outburst of lyric poetry; for it is of the essence of lyric poetry to express personal charm. When we have read the fables of La Fontaine we have learned his heart and mind, and are no better than prigs or pedants if we do not love him. Considering his awkwardness of speech and his frequent fits of silence, men found him in actual life singularly attractive. The secret may have nestled in his smile or hid in the wrinkles about his eyes; we cannot tell. But in the fables, objective though they are, we do not have to wait long to catch the elf at play. It is his childlike self-surrender, which comes at once with engaging frankness or after much coy hesitation and a playful chase. All that he is and thinks, he sweetly confides to us, at least more fully than was common among French poets in his day. He does not skulk behind convention or pose upon a pedestal of approved usage. Here—though he knew it not, and his friends Boileau and Racine would have denied it—here is what makes him a great lyric poet. No school could claim him, yet he was liberal of himself to every reader. Like the attractive heroine of his first fable, he might say:—

«Day and night to every comer
I was singing, I'm afraid.»

And strange to say, while being so truly himself that he became the greatest lyric poet his country produced in a stretch of two hundred years, La Fontaine is also the epitome and type of whatever is most French. He is the national poet *par excellence.* He represents not so much his age as his race. Indeed, he is not so fairly representative of his age as are the dramatists, and particularly Racine. But we recognize in La Fontaine the French intelligence, as it is common to all centuries and specialized in every individual. It is not enough to say that he abounds in wit: the striking thing is that French wit and the wit of La Fontaine are one—aerified, dry, diffused, of the manner rather than the substance, not intrusive, not insistent, but circumambient and touch-and-go. There is no forced emphasis, no zeal to convert; but only a genial willingness to suggest amendment, provided always it can be done with a laughing avoidance of proffering one's own example. Moreover, La Fontaine, like all his countrymen, clings to the concrete. The mystery of an unrealized abstraction has for him and for them the horror of the blackness of darkness to a child. A writer of fables is tempted to be abstract and to moralize. Some of La Fontaine's fables have no moral, either expressed or discoverable. In others the lesson is added perfunctorily, as if in obedience to the tradition of the art, and for the sake of good form. But whether or not they are all deserving strictly of the name, they give perennial delight; for as Thoreau says, «All fables indeed have their morals, but the innocent enjoy the story.»

Any man who has personal charm, and who will but express himself naturally in words, may hope to interest us; but unless he have also style we shall not esteem him a great writer. Whether we call it a miracle or only an acquisition, style is something divine; perhaps never more divine than when acquired by patient toil. La Fontaine possessed the most exquisite literary gift; and what it behooves us to perceive is that this too came as a reward for his supreme virtue of naturalness. He wrote with easy indifference to the rigorous precepts of rhetoricians, who were trying to unify and modernize French literature. He deftly eluded the rules of seventeenth-century diction, and would not belong exclusively to the «grand age.» He was not above using the marrowy, forcible, homely language of an earlier time, or its strong short forms of verse. The modest man did not know it, but he had struck root in a richer soil than his contemporaries, and his branches will flourish in immortal green when most of theirs have withered.

Geo McLean Harper

[The three following fables are translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by George McLean Harper.]

DEATH AND THE WOODCUTTER

A POOR woodcutter, covered with green boughs,
Under the fagot's weight and his own age
Groaning and bent, ending his weary stage,
Was struggling homeward to his smoky hut.
At last, worn out with labor and with pain,
Letting his fagot down, he thinks again
What little pleasure he has had in life.
Is there so cursed a wretch in all the strife?
No bread sometimes, and never any rest;
With taxes, soldiers, children, and a wife,
Creditors, forced toil oppressed,
He is the picture of a man unblessed.

He cries for Death. Death comes straightway,
And asks why he was called upon.
«Help me,» the poor man says, «I pray,
To lift this wood, then I'll begone.»

Death comes to end our woes.
But who called him? Not I!
The motto of mankind still goes:
We'll suffer all, sooner than die.

THE OAK AND THE REED

THE Oak one day said to the Reed:—
«You have good cause to rail at partial fate.
You groan beneath a hedge-wren's trifling weight;
A puff of air, a breath indeed,
Which softly wrinkles the water's face,
Makes you sink down in piteous case;
Whereas my brow, like Alp or Apennine,
Reflects the sunset's radiance divine,
And braves the tempest's hate.
What I call zephyrs seem north winds to you.
Moreover, in my shelter if you grew,
Under the leaves I generously scatter,
My patronage you would not rue,
When storms do blow and rains do batter.
But you spring up on the frontier

Bordering the showery kingdoms of the wind.
Against you unjust nature sure has sinned.»

«Your pity,» quoth the bulrush in reply,
«Comes from a noble heart. But have no fear:
To dread the winds you have more cause than I,
Who bend, but break not. Many a year and age
To their terrific rage
You've turned a stalwart back;
But not yet is the end.» Scarce had he spoke
When from the north, with flying rack,
Hurried the wildest storm that ever broke
From winter's icy fields.
The tree stands firm, the bulrush yields.
The wind with fury takes fresh head,
And casts the monarch roots on high,
Whose lofty brow was neighbor to the sky
And whose feet touched the empire of the dead.

THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE ANT

Miss Grasshopper having sung
All through summer,
Found herself in sorry plight
When the wind began to bite:
Not a bit of grub or fly
Met the little wanton's eye;
So she wept for hunger sore
At the Ant her neighbor's door,
Begging her just once to bend
And a little grain to lend
Till warm weather came again.
«I will pay you,» cried she then,
«Ere next harvest, on my soul,
Interest and principal.»
Now the Ant is not a lender—
From that charge who needs defend her?
«Tell me what you did last summer?»
Said she to the beggar-maid.
«Day and night, to every comer
I was singing, I'm afraid.»
«Singing! Do tell! How entrancing!
Well then, vagrant, off! be dancing!»

THE WOLF AND THE DOG

A PROWLING wolf, whose shaggy skin
(So strict the watch of dogs had been)
Hid little but his bones,
Once met a mastiff dog astray.
A prouder, fatter, sleeker Tray
No human mortal owns.
Sir Wolf, in famished plight,
Would fain have made a ration
Upon his fat relation:
But then he first must fight;
And well the dog seemed able
To save from wolfish table
His carcass snug and tight.
So then in civil conversation
The wolf expressed his admiration
Of Tray's fine case. Said Tray politely,
«Yourself, good sir, may be as sightly;
Quit but the woods, advised by me:
For all your fellows here, I see,
Are shabby wretches, lean and gaunt,
Belike to die of haggard want.
With such a pack, of course it follows,
One fights for every bit he swallows.
Come then with me, and share
On equal terms our princely fare.»
«But what with you
Has one to do?»
Inquires the wolf. «Light work indeed,»
Replies the dog: «you only need
To bark a little now and then,
To chase off duns and beggar-men,
To fawn on friends that come or go forth,
Your master please, and so forth;
For which you have to eat
All sorts of well-cooked meat—
Cold pullets, pigeons, savory messes—
Besides unnumbered fond caresses.»
The wolf, by force of appetite,
Accepts the terms outright,
Tears glistening in his eyes;
But faring on, he spies
A galled spot on the mastiff's neck.

«What's that?» he cries. «Oh, nothing but a speck.»
«A speck?»—«Ay, ay; 'tis not enough to pain me;
Perhaps the collar's mark by which they chain me.»
«Chain! chain you! What! run you not, then,
Just where you please and when?»
«Not always, sir; but what of that?»
«Enough for me, to spoil your fat!
It ought to be a precious price
Which could to servile chains entice;
For me, I'll shun them while I've wit.»
So ran Sir Wolf, and runneth yet.

Translation of Elizur Wright.

THE TWO DOVES

Two doves once cherished for each other
The love that brother hath for brother.
But one, of scenes domestic tiring,
To see the foreign world aspiring,
Was fool enough to undertake
A journey long, o'er land and lake.
«What plan is this?» the other cried;
«Wouldst quit so soon thy brother's side?
This absence is the worst of ills;
Thy heart may bear, but me it kills.
Pray let the dangers, toil, and care,
Of which all travelers tell,
Your courage somewhat quell.
Still, if the season later were—
Oh, wait the zephyrs!—hasten not—»
Just now the raven, on his oak,
In hoarser tones than usual spoke.
«My heart forebodes the saddest lot,—
The falcons' nets— Alas, it rains!
My brother, are thy wants supplied—
Provisions, shelter, pocket-guide,
And all that unto health pertains?»
These words occasioned some demur
In our imprudent traveler.

But restless curiosity
Prevailed at last; and so said he:—

«The matter is not worth a sigh:
Three days at most will satisfy;
And then returning, I shall tell
You all the wonders that befell,—
With scenes enchanting and sublime
Shall sweeten all our coming time.
Who seeth naught, hath naught to say.
My travel's course, from day to day,
Will be the source of great delight.
   A store of tales I shall relate:
   Say, There I lodged at such a date,
And saw there such and such a sight.
You'll think it all occurred to you.»
On this, both, weeping, bade adieu.

Away the lonely wanderer flew.—
A thunder-cloud began to lower;
He sought, as shelter from the shower,
The only tree that graced the plain,
Whose leaves ill turned the pelting rain.
The sky once more serene above,
On flew our drenched and dripping dove,
And dried his plumage as he could.
Next, on the borders of a wood,
He spied some scattered grains of wheat,
Which one, he thought, might safely eat;
For there another dove he saw.—
He felt the snare around him draw!
This wheat was but a treacherous bait
To lure poor pigeons to their fate.
The snare had been so long in use,
With beak and wings he struggled loose:
Some feathers perished while it stuck;
But what was worst in point of luck,
A hawk, the cruelest of foes,
Perceived him clearly as he rose,
Off dragging, like a runaway,
A piece of string. The bird of prey
Had bound him, in a moment more,
Much faster than he was before;
But from the clouds an eagle came,
And made the hawk himself his game.
By war of robbers profiting,
The dove for safety plied the wing,

And lighting on a ruined wall,
Believed his dangers ended all.
A roguish boy had there a sling,
(Age pitiless,
We must confess,)
And by a most unlucky fling,
Half killed our hapless dove;
Who now, no more in love
With foreign traveling,
And lame in leg and wing,
Straight homeward urged his crippled flight;
Fatigued, but glad, arrived at night,
In truly sad and piteous plight.
The doves re-joined: I leave you all to say,
What pleasure might their pains repay.
Ah, happy lovers, would you roam?
Pray, let it not be far from home.
To each the other ought to be
A world of beauty ever new;
In each the other ought to see
The whole of what is good and true.

Myself have loved; nor would I then,
For all the wealth of crownèd men,
Or arch celestial, paved with gold,
The presence of those woods have sold,
And fields and banks and hillock which
Were by the joyful steps made rich,
And smiled beneath the charming eyes
Of her who made my heart a prize,—
To whom I pledged it, nothing loath,
And sealed the pledge with virgin oath.
Ah, when will time such moments bring again?
To me are sweet and charming objects vain—
My soul forsaking to its restless mood?
Oh, did my withered heart but dare
To kindle for the bright and good,
Should not I find the charms still there?
Is love, to me, with things that were?

Translation of Elizur Wright.

THE CAT, THE WEASEL, AND THE YOUNG RABBIT

John Rabbit's palace under ground
Was once by Goody Weasel found.
She, sly of heart, resolved to seize
The place, and did so at her ease.
She took possession while its lord
Was absent on the dewy sward,
Intent upon his usual sport,—
A courtier at Aurora's court.
When he had browsed his fill of clover,
And cut his pranks all nicely over,
Home Johnny came to take his drowse,
All snug within his cellar-house.
The weasel's nose he came to see,
Outsticking through the open door.
«Ye gods of hospitality!»
Exclaimed the creature, vexèd sore,
«Must I give up my father's lodge?
Ho! Madam Weasel, please to budge,
Or, quicker than a weasel's dodge,
I'll call the rats to pay their grudge!»
The sharp-nosed lady made reply
That she was first to occupy.

«The cause of war was surely small—
A house where one could only crawl!
And though it were a vast domain,»
Said she, «I'd like to know what will
Could grant to John perpetual reign,—
The son of Peter or of Bill,—
More than to Paul, or even me.»
John Rabbit spoke—great lawyer he—
Of custom, usage, as the law,
Whereby the house, from sire to son,
As well as all its store of straw,
From Peter came at length to John.
Who could present a claim so good
As he, the first possessor, could?
«Now,» said the dame, «let's drop dispute,
And go before Raminagrobis,
Who'll judge not only in this suit,
But tell us truly whose the globe is.»

This person was a hermit cat,
A cat that played the hypocrite;

A saintly mouser, sleek and fat,
An arbiter of keenest wit.
John Rabbit in the judge concurred,
And off went both their case to broach
Before his Majesty, the furred.
Said Clapperclaw, «My kits, approach,
And put your noses to my ears:
I'm deaf, almost, by weight of years.»
And so they did, not fearing aught.
The good apostle Clapperclaw
Then laid on each a well-armed paw,
And both to an agreement brought,
By virtue of his tuskèd jaw.
This brings to mind the fate
Of little kings before the great.

Translation of Elizur Wright.

THE COBBLER AND THE FINANCIER

A cobbler sang from morn till night:
'Twas sweet and marvelous to hear;
His trills and quavers told the ear
Of more contentment and delight,
Enjoyed by that laborious wight,
Than e'er enjoyed the sages seven,
Or any mortals short of heaven.
His neighbor, on the other hand,
With gold in plenty at command,
But little sang, and slumbered less—
A financier of great success.
If e'er he dozed at break of day,
The cobbler's song drove sleep away;
And much he wished that Heaven had made
Sleep a commodity of trade,
In market sold, like food and drink,
So much an hour, so much a wink.
At last, our songster did he call
To meet him in his princely hall.
Said he, «Now, honest Gregory,
What may your yearly earnings be?»
«My yearly earnings! faith, good sir,
I never go, at once, so far,»
The cheerful cobbler said,
And queerly scratched his head,—

«I never reckon in that way,
But cobble on from day to day,
Content with daily bread.»
«Indeed! Well, Gregory, pray,
What may your earnings be per day?»
«Why, sometimes more and sometimes less.
The worst of all, I must confess,
(And but for which our gains would be
A pretty sight indeed to see,)
Is that the days are made so many
In which we cannot earn a penny.
The sorest ill the poor man feels:
They tread upon each other's heels,
Those idle days of holy saints!
And though the year is shingled o'er,
The parson keeps a-finding more!»
With smiles provoked by these complaints,
Replied the lordly financier,
«I'll give you better cause to sing.
These hundred pounds I hand you here
Will make you happy as a king.
Go, spend them with a frugal heed:
They'll long supply your every need.»
The cobbler thought the silver more
Than he had ever dreamed, before,
The mines for ages could produce,
Or world with all its people use.
He took it home, and there did hide,
And with it laid his joy aside.
No more of song, no more of sleep,
But cares, suspicions, in their stead,
And false alarms, by fancy fed.
His eyes and ears their vigils keep,
And not a cat can tread the floor
But seems a thief slipped through the door.
At last, poor man!
Up to the financier he ran,—
Then in his morning nap profound:
«Oh, give me back my songs,» cried he,
«And sleep, that used so sweet to be,
And take the money, every pound!»

Translation of Elizur Wright.

THE LARK AND THE FARMER

«Depend upon yourself alone,»
Has to a common proverb grown.
'Tis thus confirmed in Æsop's way:—
The larks to build their nests are seen
Among the wheat-crops young and green;
That is to say,
What time all things, dame Nature heeding,
Betake themselves to love and breeding,—
The monstrous whales and sharks
Beneath the briny flood,
The tigers in the wood,
And in the fields, the larks.
One she, however, of these last,
Found more than half the springtime past
Without the taste of springtime pleasures;
When firmly she set up her will
That she would be a mother still,
And resolutely took her measures;—
First, got herself by Hymen matched;
Then built her nest, laid, sat, and hatched.
All went as well as such things could;
The wheat crop ripening ere the brood
Were strong enough to take their flight.
Aware how perilous their plight,
The lark went out to search for food,
And told her young to listen well,
And keep a constant sentinel.
«The owner of this field,» said she,
«Will come, I know, his grain to see.
Hear all he says: we little birds
Must shape our conduct by his words.»

No sooner was the lark away
Than came the owner with his son.
«This wheat is ripe,» said he: «now run
And give our friends a call
To bring their sickles all,
And help us, great and small,
To-morrow, at the break of day.»
The lark, returning, found no harm,
Except her nest in wild alarm.

Says one, « We heard the owner say,
‹ Go, give our friends a call
To help to-morrow, break of day.› »
Replied the lark, « If that is all,
We need not be in any fear,
But only keep an open ear.
As gay as larks now eat your victuals.»—
They ate and slept, the great and littles.
The dawn arrives, but not the friends;
The lark soars up; the owner wends
His usual round to view his land.
« This grain,» says he, « ought not to stand.
Our friends do wrong; and so does he
Who trusts that friends will friendly be.
My son, go call our kith and kin
To help us get our harvest in.»
This second order made
The little larks still more afraid.
« He sent for kindred, mother, by his son:
The work will now indeed be done.»
« No, darlings: go to sleep;
Our lowly nest we'll keep.»
With reason said, for kindred there came none.
Thus, tired of expectation vain,
Once more the owner viewed his grain.
« My son,» said he, « we're surely fools
To wait for other people's tools;
As if one might, for love or pelf,
Have friends more faithful than himself!
Engrave this lesson deep, my son.
And know you now what must be done?
We must ourselves our sickles bring,
And while the larks their matins sing,
Begin the work; and on this plan,
Get in our harvest as we can.»

This plan the lark no sooner knew,
Than, « Now's the time,» she said, « my chicks:»
And taking little time to fix,
Away they flew;
All fluttering, soaring, often grounding,
Decamped without a trumpet sounding.

Translation of Elizur Wright.

THE HERON

One day,—no matter when or where,—
A long-legged heron chanced to fare
By a certain river's brink,
With his long, sharp beak
Helved on his slender neck;—
'Twas a fish-spear, you might think.
The water was clear and still;
The carp and the pike there at will
Pursued their silent fun,
Turning up, ever and anon,
A golden side to the sun.
With ease might the heron have made
Great profits in his fishing trade.
So near came the scaly fry,
They might be caught by the passer-by.
But he thought he better might
Wait for a better appetite;
For he lived by rule, and could not eat,
Except at his hours, the best of meat.
Anon his appetite returned once more;
So, approaching again the shore,
He saw some tench taking their leaps,
Now and then, from their lowest deeps.
With as dainty a taste as Horace's rat,
He turned away from such food as that.
«What, tench for a heron! poh!
I scorn the thought, and let them go.»
The tench refused, there came a gudgeon:
«For all that,» said the bird, «I budge on.
I'll ne'er open my beak, if the gods please,
For such mean little fishes as these.»
He did it for less;
For it came to pass,
That not another fish could he see;
And at last so hungry was he
That he thought it some avail
To find on the bank a single snail. . . .

Translation of Elizur Wright.

THE ANIMALS SICK OF THE PLAGUE

The sorest ill that Heaven hath
Sent on this lower world in wrath —
The plague (to call it by its name),
One single day of which
Would Pluto's ferryman enrich,—
Waged war on beasts, both wild and tame.
They died not all, but all were sick:
No hunting now, by force or trick,
To save what might so soon expire.
No food excited their desire;
Nor wolf nor fox now watched to slay
The innocent and tender prey.
The turtles fled;
So love and therefore joy were dead.
The lion council held, and said:—
«My friends, I do believe
This awful scourge, for which we grieve,
Is for our sins a punishment
Most righteously by Heaven sent.
Let us our guiltiest beast resign,
A sacrifice to wrath divine.
Perhaps this offering, truly small,
May gain the life and health of all.
By history we find it noted
That lives have been just so devoted.
Then let us all turn eyes within,
And ferret out the hidden sin.
Himself let no one spare nor flatter,
But make clean conscience in the matter.
For me, my appetite has played the glutton
Too much and often upon mutton.
What harm had e'er my victims done?
I answer truly, None.
Perhaps sometimes, by hunger pressed,
I've eat the shepherd with the rest.
I yield myself, if need there be:
And yet I think in equity,
Each should confess his sins with me;
For laws of right and justice cry,
The guiltiest alone should die.»

«Sire,» said the fox, «your Majesty
Is humbler than a king should be,

And over-squeamish in the case.
What! eating stupid sheep a crime?
No, never, sire, at any time.
It rather was an act of grace,
A mark of honor to their race.
And as to shepherds, one may swear,
The fate your Majesty describes
Is recompense less full than fair
For such usurpers o'er our tribes."

Thus Reynard glibly spoke,
And loud applause from flatterers broke.
Of neither tiger, boar, nor bear,
Did any keen inquirer dare
To ask for crimes of high degree;
The fighters, biters, scratchers, all
From every mortal sin were free;
The very dogs, both great and small,
Were saints as far as dogs could be.

The ass, confessing in his turn,
Thus spoke in tones of deep concern:—
"I happened through a mead to pass;
The monks, its owners, were at mass;
Keen hunger, leisure, tender grass,
And add to these the Devil too,
All tempted me the deed to do.
I browsed the bigness of my tongue;
Since truth must out, I own it wrong."
On this, a hue and cry arose,
As if the beasts were all his foes:
A wolf, haranguing lawyer-wise,
Denounced the ass for sacrifice,—
The bald-pate, scabby, ragged lout,
By whom the plague had come, no doubt.
His fault was judged a hanging crime.
"What! eat another's grass? oh, shame!
The noose of rope and death sublime,
For that offense, were all too tame!"
And soon poor Grizzle felt the same.

Thus human courts acquit the strong,
And doom the weak as therefore wrong.

Translation of Elizur Wright.

A DE LAMARTINE.

LAMARTINE

(1790–1869)

BY ALCÉE FORTIER

The eighteenth century in France was not fruitful in poets; for in order to be a poet it is not sufficient to write elegant, witty, and correct verses. There must be real inspiration in a great poem; and that indispensable quality was lacking in the works of Voltaire, of J. B. Rousseau, of Gilbert, and of their contemporaries. There was only one true poet in France in that century,—André Chénier, who fell a victim to the Revolution on July 25th, 1794, two days before the 9th Thermidor, which put an end to Robespierre's life and to the Reign of Terror. Chénier's brief works are charming; they were inspired by the poets of Greece, and are graceful and tender. They were little known at the time of the author's death, however, and a complete edition was published only in 1819, one year before the world was delighted with the 'Méditations' of Lamartine. The latter poet, however, owes nothing to Chénier, who is essentially a classic animated with true lyric passion.

If we wish to find precursors to Lamartine, we must go back to prose writers: to J. J. Rousseau, whose works are so full of human passion and at the same time of love of nature; to Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, whose 'Paul and Virginia' is so simple and charming; to Madame de Staël, who made known to the French the great German bards, Goethe and Schiller; finally to Châteaubriand, whose 'Atala,' 'René,' and 'Martyrs' are more poetic than all the verses written in the eighteenth century except those of André Chénier. The great writers just mentioned had prepared the way for a new Renaissance in the beginning of the nineteenth century; and Lamartine was fortunate in striking a new chord with which vibrated in unison the hearts of all who read the tender, melancholy, and harmonious words of the 'Méditations.'

It was the first time in French literature that poetry was so subjective. The works of Rousseau, of Madame de Staël, of Châteaubriand, were permeated with the personality of the authors; but such had not been the case with André Chénier and with the poets of the seventeenth century. Lamartine's 'Méditations' resembled nothing which had yet been published in France, and for that reason the manuscript was rejected by the great publishing firm of Firmin Didot. The poet expressed his own feelings in such melodious language, and those feelings were so natural and human, that all the readers of the ‘Méditations’ took a personal interest in sentiments which were their own as well as those of the poet. A critic has said of Lamartine, “He was not a poet, but poetry itself.” This is eminently true; for there had not been in the French language for nearly two centuries such touching, such musical lines as those of the ‘Méditations.’ Racine’s verses alone could be compared with them. It was in 1820 that the ‘Méditations’ were published; after their rejection by Didot the author read ‘Le Lac’ in the parlor of Madame de Saint-Aulaire, and created a deep impression. The volume of ‘Méditations’ soon found a publisher, and he became speedily famous.

Alphonse de Prat de Lamartine was born on October 21st, 1790, at Mâcon, on the Saône. The country watered by this river is picturesque and fertile, and the Saône itself is a pretty stream which meets the Rhône at Lyon, and is merged into the impetuous river claimed as their own by the men of Provence. In his ‘Confidences’ and his ‘Raphael’ Lamartine gives us his autobiography; somewhat idealized, perhaps, but correct in the main. He speaks with veneration of his father, who lived long enough to see his son become an illustrious man; but he has a perfect devotion for his mother, who was beautiful, noble, and pious, and who communicated to him that sensibility, that generosity, which have inspired his poetical works. His father, however, was an austere soldier, and transmitted to his son that courage which enabled him later to quell the surging masses by his manly eloquence.

Lamartine’s early years were free and happy; he spent some time at a Jesuit college, but when he returned home it seemed to him that in the poetry of Creation, “he read Greek and Latin verses translated by God himself into grand and living images.” His favorite authors were Tasso, Dante, Petrarch, Milton, Shakespeare, Châteaubriand, and above all “Ossian,” the mythical Homer of the Gaels, whose alleged poem was so popular in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Lamartine relates to us in his ‘Confidences’ his innocent love for Lucy, when both he and the young girl were sixteen years old. Then comes that most charming episode of the poet’s life, his voyage to Italy and his love for Graziella, the Neapolitan fisherman’s daughter. The simple girl gives her heart to the young stranger: but the latter is obliged to return to France, and a few months later he receives a letter and a small package; it is the last farewell of the dying girl, and her beautiful black locks sent as a memento. M. Edmond Biré, who is a true iconoclast, wishes to prove that Graziella was not a fisherman's daughter; that she was a shoemaker's daughter, and never sailed with the poet on the blue waters of the Mediterranean. What care we for the truth of Lamartine's story? The creatures of the poet's imagination are more real than any living man and woman; and on the way from Naples to Pompeii, one looks with eager eyes at the fair island of Procida, where Lamartine met Graziella and began his delightful idyl.

It is in 'Raphael' that we must look for other episodes in Lamartine's life. We see the poet at Aix, in Savoy; he saves the life of Julie, and relates this incident in his admirable 'Le Lac.' He loves Julie, and goes with her to the Charmettes, where had lived Rousseau and Madame de Warens; and he pays a just tribute to the woman who gave hospitality and glory to Rousseau, while the author of the 'Confessions' has degraded her and «has bequeathed shame to her.»

As the 'Méditations' had made Lamartine immediately famous, he married a beautiful and wealthy Englishwoman, Miss Marianne Birch, and became secretary of the French embassy at Florence. He was later appointed minister to Greece; but the Revolution of July 1830 interrupted his diplomatic career, and he undertook in 1832 a voyage to the Orient, which he has related in one of his best-written books. He traveled with princely magnificence, in company with his wife and Julia his only child,—whom he lost in the East. The 'Voyage en Orient' is a beautiful work, and may be read with interest even after Châteaubriand's 'Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem.' Lamartine's prose is almost as harmonious as his verses; and the only defect of the book is that the author has colored somewhat, with the glamour of his imagination, the description of the places which he visited.

When the 'Voyage en Orient' was published, Lamartine was already a member of the French Academy, and had written the 'Méditations' (1820), the 'Nouvelles Méditations' (1823), and the 'Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses' (1830). The first-named poems are sad and religious, but are also essentially tender; a hymn to love and the well-beloved. On reading them one feels no despondency: it is a melodious voice which speaks to us of love, of death, and of God, and reconciles us to the idea of death by the idea of God. In the 'Harmonies' we see that it is indeed the religious idea that animates the book; but it is an idea loftier and less tender sometimes than that of the 'Méditations.' The 'Harmonies' may be called a religious epic; it is in some parts the glorification of Jehovah through the marvels of Creation. Ask the oak-tree how it was born: An eagle has caught the acorn fallen from the tree, and has carried it to its nest. Soon the nest rolls along swept away by a tempest, and the acorn falls into a furrow. It is watered by the showers of spring, the seed opens, and the gigantic oak spreads its knotty and powerful boughs over the peaceful flocks in the fields. The worlds which surround us are also the work of Jehovah; and the poet, in contemplating the Infinite, is touched with sadness. He asks himself what is life, what is death? and he says that one must regret, on leaving this world, only one thing,—love and the woman loved.

In 'Jocelyn' (1836), however, love is conquered by duty. Jocelyn has entered a seminary in order that his sister may have a larger dowry and marry the man she loves. He is on the point of becoming a priest, when he is cast into a grotto on the top of the Alps by the storm of the Revolution. He receives into his wild abode Laurence, whom he believes to be a boy: he loves her after he has learnt who she is, and she also loves him: but he abandons the charming child to answer the call of an old priest, his benefactor. He takes the oath which binds him to God's altar, and Laurence is lost to him. He is at first in despair; but his soul is quieted, and he leads until old age the saintly life of a devoted priest. These few words do not give an adequate idea of 'Jocelyn,' in the opinion of many critics the most beautiful poem in the French language. If ever the author of the 'Méditations' and the 'Harmonies' were to be forgotten, the humble Jocelyn would recall to men the name of him who composed such noble verses.

In the mind of the poet, 'Jocelyn' was an episode of the great epic in which he intended to show in what way the human soul reaches perfection. 'La Chute d'un Ange' (1838) is the second episode of the poem; but in spite of beautiful verses, we no longer recognize in this work the tender lover of Elvire, of the 'Méditations.' 'La Chute d'un Ange' presents to us some horrible scenes, and the story is supernatural and uninteresting. However, if Lamartine had completed his epic, he doubtless would have shown us in another episode not the fallen angel, but man elevated by his courage and by his piety, and rising to heaven in the form of an angel. He succeeded better in the 'Last Song of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' and in the 'Recueillements Poétiques' (1839), where we see the last beam of that poetic sun which had guided so many thousand souls in their route toward the supreme ends,—love and religion.

After the 'Recueillements' Lamartine became a historian, a man of action; and he pleaded in his 'History of the Girondists' the cause of the Revolution. His is a most eloquent plea, and his work was received with enthusiasm; although as a history it is not sufficiently based on documents, and is not reliable. The style of the book is entrancing and passionate, and it will live as a work of art, as a masterpiece of vigorous and poetic prose.

The 'History of the Girondists' appeared not long before the Revolution of 1848; and the men of 1789 and 1793 as depicted by Lamartine exerted a great influence on the men of 1848, who established the second French republic. Such is the magic of Lamartine's style that we excuse the faults of the great Revolution, and exclaim with him:—“That history is glorious and sad, like the day after a victory and like the eve of another combat. But if that history is full of mourning, it is above all full of faith. It resembles the antique drama; where, while the narrator relates the events, the chorus of the people sings of the victory, weeps for the victims, and addresses a hymn of consolation and hope to God.” Let us hope, although the other combat predicted by the poet failed in 1848, that it was a success in 1870, when was established the third republic, which has rendered France again prosperous and powerful.

Lamartine played a very important part in the Revolution of 1848, and during the provisional government he became Minister of Foreign Affairs. During a riot in Paris he opposed the red flag of anarchy and sedition; and speaking to the people from the Hôtel de Ville, he said:—“I shall repulse unto death this flag of blood. . . . The red flag has only been dragged around the Champ de Mars in the blood of the people in '91; the tricolored flag has gone around the world with the name, the glory, and the liberty of the Fatherland!” For a short time Lamartine was the most popular man in France; he saved the country from anarchy in May 1848, and was a candidate for the presidency of the republic. He obtained very few votes, and disappeared almost completely from the political arena. France rejected the great poet, the orator and statesman; and elected as President, Louis Napoleon, who was soon to throttle the republic and to become Napoleon III. Lamartine would not have thrown France into the disaster of Sedan.

His political career being practically ended, Lamartine became again a writer. His ‘History of the Revolution of 1848’ is rather partial; but he gives in his ‘History of the Restoration’ an interesting account of the literary salons of the time. During the empire the poet, who had always been prodigal, fell into poverty, and wrote for a living a great many works which have not added to his glory. We may mention, however, ‘Généviève,’ the ‘Tailleur de Pierre de Saint-Point,’ and his familiar course of literature, where are to be seen some traces of the exquisite grace of his earlier works. ‘Toussaint L'Ouverture,’ a drama, has little merit; and Lamartine will remain for posterity the author of the ‘Méditations,’ of the ‘Harmonies,’ of ‘Jocelyn.’ He died in Paris on March 1st, 1869. His works are not as popular now as in his lifetime; but he certainly deserves to be ranked among the first of French poets, with Hugo, Musset, and Vigny, and his sweet though not faultless verses will ever be the delight of mankind.

Alcée Fortier

THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER

From ‹Graziella.› Reprinted by permission of its publishers, A. C. McClurg & Co.

The prow of the boat in striking against the rock gave a dry and hollow sound, like the crash of a board that falls accidentally and breaks. We jumped into the water; we fastened the boat as well as we could with the rope that was left, and then followed the old man and the child, who took the lead.

We climbed a sort of narrow stairway that led up the side of the cliff,—a succession of uneven steps, slippery with the spray from the sea, which had been dug out with a chisel. The ascent up this steep stairway had been greatly facilitated by some artificial steps, made by long poles, the points of which had been forced into the apertures of the rock; and these frail supports were covered by planks torn from old boats, or by heaps of branches from the chestnut-trees, still ornamented with their dead leaves.

After having ascended slowly four or five hundred steps in this way, we found ourselves in a kind of inclosure, suspended on high, and surrounded by a parapet of stones. At the end of this court-yard there were two gloomy archways that seemed to lead into a cave. Above these great arches were two arcades, low and rounded, with a terrace for a roof, the edges of which were decorated with flower-pots of rosemary. Under the arcades a rustic walk could be seen, in which hanging masses of *maïs* glistened in the light of the moon like golden ornaments.

A door made of planks, rudely dovetailed, opened upon this walk. At the right an inclined plane of ground, upon which a little house was situated, gradually came up to the same level. A great fig-tree and some tortuous vine stalks were bending over the angle of the house, confusing their leaves and fruits at the entrance of the walk, festooned and creeping over the wall that supported the arcades above. Their branches had formed bars to the two low windows that looked out upon this little garden walk; and if there had been no window, the low, square, and solid house might have been mistaken for one of the light-gray rocks, peculiar to the coast, or for one of those blocks of petrified lava (entwined in the branches of the chestnut, the ivy, and the vine) out of which the grape cultivators of Castellamare and

Sorrento hew caves, close them with a door, and there preserve the wine by the side of the stock that first bore it.

Out of breath from the long and steep ascent we had made, and from the weight of the oars which we carried on our shoulders, the old man, my companion, and I stopped in this courtyard for a moment in order to rest. But the boy, tossing his oar upon a pile of brushwood, ran lightly up the stairway; and with his torch still lighted and in his hand, began knocking at one of the windows and calling in glee for his grandmother and sister.

«Mother! Sister! Madre! Sorrellina! Gaetano! Graziella! Graziella!» he shouted. «Wake up; open the door: it's father; it's me; and we have strangers with us.»

We soon heard a voice, not more than half awake, yet clear and soft, utter some exclamations of surprise from within the house. Then the window was partly opened, pushed up by an arm naked and white, that reached out from a flowing sleeve; and we saw by the light of the torch which the boy, balancing himself on tiptoe, raised toward the window, the lovely face of a young girl appear between the shutters which were thrown widely open.

Awakened from a sound sleep by the unexpected sound of her brother's voice, Graziella did not think, nor had she time, to arrange her dress. She had hurried to the window in bare feet and just as she had arisen from the bed. Her long black hair, half of which fell down over one of her cheeks, the other half curled around her neck, was swept from one side of her shoulder to the other by the wind; which still blew harshly, and kept hitting the shutter and lashing her face like the wing of a raven driven by the storm.

The young girl rubbed her eyes with the back of her hands, raising her elbows and expanding her shoulders, with the first natural gesture of a child on awakening, that wishes to drive away sleep. Her night-robe, fastened lightly around her neck, revealed only the outlines of a high and delicate waist, the youthful rounding of which was scarcely perceptible under the covering. Her eyes, large and oval in form, were of that undecided color between deep black and the blue of the sea, which tones down the natural radiance by a certain softness of expression, and unites in the woman's eye the gentleness of her soul and the force of her passion in about equal proportions:

a celestial color which the eyes of the Asiatic and Italian women borrow from the brilliant light of their fiery days, and from the serene blue of their heaven, their sea, and their night. Her cheeks were full, round, plump, of a natural pale complexion, but a little browned by the climate; not of the unnatural pallor of the North, but of that pure whiteness of the South, which resembles the color of marble exposed for centuries to the air and sea. Her mouth, the lips of which were half opened and very full, and heavier than those of our women, had the characteristic lines of frankness and goodness. Her teeth, small but shining, sparkled in the fluttering light of the torch like shells of pearl glistening at the bottom of a wave under the rays of the sun.

While she was talking to her little brother, half of her words were carried to us by the wind; and though somewhat sharply accentuated, they sounded like sweet music to our ears. Her features, as changeable as the flittering torch that lighted them up, rapidly passed from surprise to alarm, from alarm to joy, from sympathy to laughter. Then she saw us standing behind the trunk of the great fig-tree, and retired in confusion from the window. Her hand abandoned the shutter, which now began to beat freely against the wall. She only took the time to awaken her grandmother and half dress herself when she came to open the door for us under the arcades, and tenderly kissed her grandfather and her brother.

The old grandmother soon made her appearance, holding in her hand a lamp of red earthenware, which cast its light upon her thin pale face, and her hair as white as the skeins of wool which were tossed over the table at the side of the spinning-wheel. She kissed her husband's hand, and kissed the boy on the forehead. The recital of what had occurred, which has taken up so many of these pages, required only a few words and gestures between the different members of this poor family. We did not hear the whole of it: we stood apart from them that we might not stop the natural outpourings of their hearts. They were poor; we were strangers: and we owed them a certain respect. The only way we had of showing it was by taking the place nearest the door and keeping perfectly still.

Graziella looked at us in surprise from time to time, as if she were in a dream. When the father had finished his story, the grandmother fell on her knees by the fireside. Graziella, stepping up to the terrace above, brought in a branch of rosemary, and some orange-blossoms like large white stars. She took a chair, arranged her flowers into a bouquet, fastening them with the long pins that she drew from her hair, and placed them before a little plaster image of the Virgin, which stood above the door, and before which a lamp was burning. We understood that this was an offering of thanks to her divine protectress for having saved her brother and her grandfather; and we shared her expression of gratitude.

The inside of the house was bare, and in almost every way as like to the outside as both inside and outside were like the immense rocks that surrounded it. The walls were entirely without plaster, and covered only with a thin coat of whitewash. Lizards, aroused by the light, shone in the crevices of the rocks, and crept under the fern leaves that served as the children's bed. Nests of swallows, whose little black heads peeped out, and whose restless eyes twinkled in surprise, hung down from the beams, still covered with bark, which formed the roof. Graziella and her grandmother slept in the second room on a curious bedstead, covered with a piece of coarse linen. A few baskets of fruits and a mule's pack-saddle lay on the shelf.

The fisherman turned toward us with a look of shame, as he indicated by a sweep of his arm the poverty of his home; then he led us up to the terrace, the place of honor both in the Orient and in the south of Italy. With the assistance of Graziella and the child Beppo, he made us a sort of shed, by placing one end of our oars upon the wall surrounding the terrace and the other end upon the ground, then covering these with a dozen or more branches from a horse-chestnut tree, recently cut on the side of the mountain. Under this shelter he spread a lot of fern leaves; he then brought us two pieces of bread, some fresh water and figs, and wished that we might sleep well.

The physical fatigue and the emotions of the day threw us into a sudden and deep sleep. When we awoke, the swallows were chirping around our bed and picking from the ground the crumbs of our supper; and the sun, already high in the heaven, heated the fagots of leaves over our heads as if they had been in a furnace.

We lay a long time stretched upon our fern leaves, lost in that peculiar state of half-sleep in which the mental faculties perceive and think before the senses give one the courage to get up or move. We exchanged a few inarticulate words, which were interrupted by long pauses and were lost in our dreams. The experiences of the previous day,—the boat rolling under our feet, the angry sea, the unapproachable rocks of the coast, the face of Graziella looking out between the two shutters and in the light of the torch,—all these visions flitted before us confusedly, and without connection or appreciation.

We were attracted from this drowsiness by the sobs and complaints of the old grandmother, who was talking to her husband inside of the house. The chimney, which ran through the terrace, brought us the sound of the voices, so that we could hear some words of the conversation. The poor woman was lamenting the loss of her jars, of the anchor, of the ropes that were almost new, and above all, of the beautiful sails woven by her own hands from her own hemp,—all of which we had been cruel enough to throw into the sea to save our own lives.

"What business had you," she asked of the old man, who was frightened into silence, "to take these two strangers, these two Frenchmen, with you? Don't you know that they are pagans (*pagani*), and that they always bring misfortune with their wickedness? The saints have punished you for it. They have stripped us of our riches, and you may still thank them that they have not taken away our souls."

The poor man did not know what to say. But Graziella, with the authority and impatience of a spoiled child, to whom the grandmother always gives way, protested against these reproaches as unjust, and taking the part of the old man, said to her grandmother:—

"Who tells you that these strangers are pagans? Are pagans ever so compassionate for the trials of poor people as these gentlemen have shown themselves? Do pagans make the sign of the cross like ourselves before the statues of the saints? Now let me tell you that yesterday evening, when you had fallen on your knees to return thanks to God, and when I had adorned the image of the Madonna with flowers, I saw them bow their heads as if they were praying, make the sign of the cross upon their breasts, and I even saw a tear glisten in the eye of the younger and fall upon his hand."

"A tear, indeed!" the old woman sharply exclaimed. "It was nothing but a drop of sea-water that fell from his hair."

"I tell you it was a tear," said Graziella angrily. "The wind that was blowing so fiercely had plenty of time to dry his hair from the time he left the beach until he had climbed to the top of the cliff. But the wind cannot dry the heart, and I tell you again that there was water in his eye."

We understood that we had an all-powerful friend in that house, for the grandmother did not answer, nor did she complain any more.

Translation of James B. Runnion.

TO MY LAMP

HAIL! sole companion of my lonely toil,
Dear witness once of dearer loves of mine!
My happiness is fled, — thy store of oil
Still with clear light doth shine!

Thou dost recall the bright days of my life,
When in Pompeii's streets I roamed along,
Evoking memories of her brilliant strife,
Half tearful, half in song.

The sun was finishing his mighty round;
I was alone among a buried host;
And in the dust my idle glances found
The name of some poor ghost.

And there I saw thee, 'neath the ashes piled;
And near thee, almost buried with the rest,
The impress left there by some lovely child,
The outline of a breast.

Perhaps by thy light did the virgin go
To pray within the fane, now desolate,
For happiness that she should never know,—
Love, ne'er to be her fate!

Within the tomb her perished beauty lies:
Youth, maiden modesty, the dawning love
A mother's tender glance could scarce surprise,
Fled to the heavens above!

She vanished like the lightning's sudden gleam,
As one wave by another swiftly borne;

Or as the last hope of some wretch's dream,
When he awakes at morn!

Beauty is not the idol of the best!
I was a fool before her feet to lie,
Forgetting that, a stranger like the rest,
She too must fade and die.

What matter, then, whether she smile or frown?
My soul would seek the worship that is sure!
It needs a god to triumph, be cast down,
And, after all, endure!

Yes, I would tear myself from vain desires,
From all that perishes and is forgot;
And I would seek, to start my altar fires,
A hope that dieth not!

The resting eagle is an eagle still:
Though 'neath his mighty wing he hides his head,
He sees his prey, he strikes it, takes his fill,—
Perchance you thought him dead?

I pity those who thought one ivy-crowned,
Child of the lyre, born but to touch the string,
Would die inglorious,—yield the golden round,
Live like a banished king.

Never shall weariness make me abjure
The gifts once prized, and cherished still the same.
My dreams shall summon back the enchantress pure,
And whisper her dear name.

Her eyes shall watch over my soul at last;
And when, dear lamp, shall come that mournful night,
When weeping friends behold me fading fast,
Thy flame shall burn more bright!

That flame has often filled my wondering thought;
The sacred emblem of our transient breath,
Mysterious power, to man's dull uses brought,
Sister of life and death!

A breath creates it, at a breath it dies;
It blots in one brief day a city's name;
Like fate ignored, or held a peerless prize
Like beauty or like fame.

See how it leaps up with a quick desire!
A spirit from on high, to earth no friend;
It takes its flight as human souls aspire,
To seek the unknown end!

All nature slowly to this end is drawn!
'Tis but a sleep, the so-called death of men:
The fly shall have its day, the flower its dawn;
Our clay shall wake again.

Do we the secrets of all nature know?
The sounds of night that on the horizon fail,
The passing cloud that lays the flowers low,
The will-o'-the-wisp of the vale?

Know we the secret of the nesting dove?
The cradle whence the tomb has snatched its prey?
What is the mystery of grief, or love,
Or night that follows day?

Have not the murmuring winds a voice, a mood?
Is not the leaf a book we cannot read?
The stream that brings us harvest or a flood,
Has not it too its screed?

Let us not strive the kindly veils to raise
Till all that we should see, life's end shall show:
Better know naught than into mysteries gaze!
Better believe than know!

Farewell, my lamp! Blessings upon thy flame!
While I believe and hope, watch thou o'er me!
If ever prideful doubt my soul should claim,
May I go out with thee!

Translation of Katharine Hillard.

ODE TO THE LAKE OF B——.

THUS sailing, sailing on forevermore,
Still borne along, to winds and waves a prey,
Can we not, on life's sea without a shore,
Cast anchor for a day?

Dear lake! one little year has scarcely flown,
And near thy waves she longed once more to see,

Behold I sit alone upon this stone,
Where once she sat with me.

As now, thy restless waves were moaning through
The creviced rocks, where they their death did meet;
And flecks of foam from off thy billows blew
Over my dear one's feet.

One night we rowed in silence,—dost recall
That night? When under all the starry sky
Was heard alone the beat of oars that fall
In cadenced harmony.

When suddenly, upon the startled ear
Accents unknown to earth melodious break;
And with these mournful words, a voice most dear
Charms all the listening lake:—

«O Time, pause in thy flight! and you, propitious hours,
Pause on your rapid ways!
Let us enjoy the springtime of our powers,
The fairest of all days!

«So many wretched souls would speed your flight,
Urge on the lingering suns,
Take with their days the canker and the blight;
Forget the happy ones!

«But all in vain I try to stay its course:
Time slips away and flies.
I say to night, Pass slowly! and the dawn
Breaks on my startled eyes.

«Let us love, then, and love forevermore!
Enjoy life while we may;
Man has no port, nor has time any shore;
It flees, we pass away!»

She paused: our hearts speak through our ardent eyes,
Half-uttered phrases tremble on the air;
And in that ecstasy our spirits rise
Up to a world more fair.

And now we cease to speak; in sweet eclipse
Our senses lie, weighed down with all love's store;
Our hearts are beating, and our clinging lips
Murmur, «Forevermore!»

Great Heaven! can then these moments of delight,
When love all happiness upon us showers,
Vanish away as swiftly in their flight
As our unhappy hours?

Eternity, the Darkness, and the Past,
What have you done with all you've made your prey?
Answer us! will you render back at last
What you have snatched away?

O lake, O silent rocks, O verdurous green!—
You that time spares, or knows how to renew,—
Keep of this night, set in this lovely scene,
At least a memory true!

A memory in thy storms and thy repose,
O lake! and where thy smiling waters lave
The sunny shore, or where the dark fir grows,
And hangs above the wave.

In the soft breeze that sighs and then is gone,
In thy shores' song, by thy shores echoed still;
In the pale star whose silvery radiance shone
Above thy wooded hill!

That moaning winds, and reeds that clashing strike,
And perfumes that on balmy breezes moved,
With all we hear, we see, we breathe, alike
May say, «They loved!»

Translation of Katharine Hillard.

FAR FROM THE WORLD

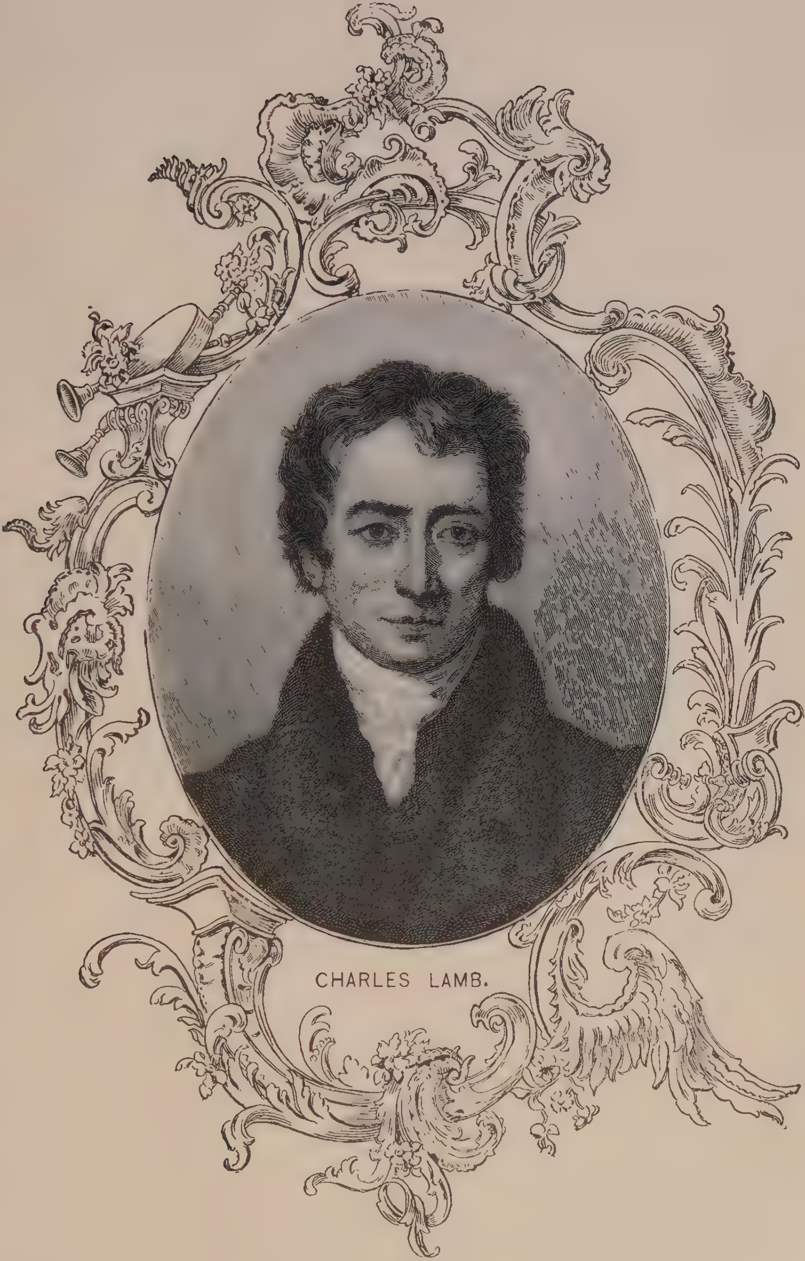
Far from the faithless and the wicked world,
Fly, O my soul! to some deep solitude;
Fly, shaking from our feet the weary dust
Of love, desire, hope, and carking care
Upon the threshold of these deserts wild.

Behold the rocks, the forests, and the shores,
Nature has molded with her mighty hands:
The streams alone have hollowed out these paths;
Their foam alone has touched the river banks
Where never human foot has left a trace.

There seek at last for peace within thyself;
Thy dreams of happiness have been but brief!
Drive them forever far from this retreat;
Love nothing but the blue sky that loves thee,
And of the sun alone ask happy days!

To wounded hearts, nature is ever sweet,
And solitude belongs to wretchedness.
Already peace re-enters my sad heart;
Already life takes up, without a jar,
Its course suspended by the hand of grief!

Translation of Katharine Hillard.



CHARLES LAMB.

CHARLES LAMB

(1775–1834)

BY ALFRED AINGER

To find anything new to write about Charles Lamb might tax the ingenuity of the most versatile and resourceful critic in the Old or New World. And yet experience shows that the lovers of Elia are never weary of listening for something more about him, and continue to welcome whatever crumbs of anecdote or fragments of biographical fact may have yet escaped collection. And this very circumstance shows that Lamb stands in a category of English-speaking humorists which is not large. Of whom could be said precisely the same thing, except such few as Shakespeare, Goldsmith, Johnson, Scott,—writers, that is to say, in whom the human personality is as interesting or even more so than anything they have written? We are interested in Shakespeare's personality, indeed, because of the very little we know about him. We are interested in Goldsmith or Lamb because we know so much, and feel towards them more as personal friends than as authors.

The personality of Lamb, indeed, is so inwrought and intertwined with the very fibre of his essays and letters that it is impossible to separate criticism of the one from that of the other. His life is written in the confidential utterances of his essays; and his occasional verse embodies allusions, even more intimate and touching, to the sadder epochs and incidents of that life. The saddest of all such incidents was in the first instance recorded in the most famous of all his lyrics—the 'Old Familiar Faces'; though Lamb rightly and wisely withdrew, when the first spasm of bitter emotion was past, the stanza concerning his mother's death.

Egotism in a writer is either the most unattractive of qualities or the most engaging. We either rejoice in it or resent it. There is hardly a third course possible. We resent it when it is a mere «trap for admiration,» or a palpable desire to establish the writer's importance. We welcome it when the heart is pure, when there is the requisite genius and individuality to make it precious. But the writer who indulges in perpetual confidences as to self must be like Cæsar's wife, «beyond suspicion»: the faintest tinge of self-consciousness is fatal to the charm of self-disclosure. Charles Lamb possesses this charm; and hence his extraordinary popularity with thousands even of those whose acquaintance with his favorite authors would not of itself suffice to make them appreciate his multifarious allusiveness. Lamb was a man of widest reading; and in directions in which the ordinary reader even now, after seventy years or so, is little versed. But thus far back, it is not too much to say that the very names of the old English writers on whom Lamb's love of poetry had been chiefly fed, were unknown to the bulk of the magazine readers whom in his essays he first addressed. It was not therefore to exhibit his reading or his antiquarian research, that he interlarded his discourse with the words of Massinger or Marlowe, Marvell or Sidney, Fuller or Sir Thomas Browne. He did not even, for the most part, introduce his quotations with any names attached. He cited them usually without even inverted commas. He had himself roamed at will in gardens and orchards of exquisite beauty and flavor, and could not help pouring what he had gathered at the feet of his readers. And his instinct did not fail him in taking this course. It was a curiously bold step, that of daring, when invited to contribute essays to the London Magazine, to depart from the familiar didactic or allegorical type which had been set by the Spectator or Rambler, and trust to the perennial attraction of the humblest human experiences. The 'South Sea House' was not an alluring title for the first essay he contributed. The 'South Sea Bubble' might have been; but all that remained of the once famous speculation was a building and a staff of clerks. But yet every dingiest and most old-fashioned institution in which men go to and fro about their business has its human side; and wherever there were men, or the traditions of men, Lamb could make their companionship full of charm. And how exquisite a thing did he make out of the memories of that old building where only two years of his own boyish life were spent:—

«This was once a house of trade, a centre of busy interests. The throng of merchants was here, the quick pulse of gain; and here some forms of business are still kept up, though the soul be long since fled. Here are still to be seen stately porticos; imposing staircases; offices roomy as the state apartments in palaces,—deserted, or thinly peopled with a few straggling clerks; the still more sacred interiors of court and committee rooms, with venerable faces of beadles, doorkeepers — directors seated in form on solemn days (to proclaim a dead dividend), at long worm-eaten tables that have been mahogany, with tarnished gilt leather coverings, supporting many silver inkstands long since dry —»

«There are many echoes,» Goethe said, «but few voices.» It is the «voices» in literature that become classics. The echoes have their short life and then die away. Lamb is one of such voices; and thus he has lived, and will live. It was not a voice that protested or proclaimed much,—and certainly never from the housetops,—but it was his own. «Compounded of many simples,» like the melancholy of Jaques in the forest, Lamb's humor was altogether free from the self-assertion or the discontent of the exiled philosopher of Arden. His sweet acquiescence in the burdens and sorrows of his life was rather that of the laughing philosopher Touchstone, whom Shakespeare has pitted against the more specious moralist. He would have pleaded that if the manner he had adopted was strange or ill-favored, it was at least «his own.»

It is remarkable that Lamb's most universally popular essay, that on ‹Roast Pig,› is by no means one of his most characteristic. It is not too much to say that many inferior humorists could have made a success almost as great out of the same material. For in this case Lamb had a really humorous notion put into his head. Given the accidental discovery of the gastronomic value of cooked meat, the humorous possibilities are at once perceptible. It is where the raw material of the essay is nothing and the treatment everything that the real individuality of Lamb stands forth. It is in such essays as the ‹Praise of Chimney-Sweepers,› or ‹Mrs. Battle on Whist,› or the ‹Recollections of an old Manor-House in Hertfordshire,› that we are to look for what gives Lamb his unique place in literature and in the hearts of those who love him.

There is food, however, for many tastes in Charles Lamb. There is the infinite pathos of such a revelation as that in ‹Dream Children,› which for delicate beauty and tenderness has no rival in English literature; there is the consummate observation and criticism of human character in ‹Imperfect Sympathies›; there is the perfection of narrative art in such an anecdote as that told in ‹Barbara S.›; there is the supreme æsthetic quality, as where he descants on the superiority of Shakespeare to any of his contemporaries, or where he compels our admiration for the moral value of such a satirist as Hogarth. We are always discovering some new faculty in Lamb, and passing from one to another with astonishing suddenness,—from the poet to the humorist, from the moral teacher to the æsthetic critic; and all the while the manner is often so like that of the gossip and jester that the reader would undervalue it as very «easy writing,» did we not know by Lamb's own confessions that his most lucid and apparently facile confidences were often «wrung from him with slow pain.» So certain is it always that «easy writing» makes «hard reading,» and that the most seeming-casual of essays, if it is to live, must have something in it of the life-blood of the writer.

And beyond all question it is the personal experiences of Lamb that generate the supreme quality of all he wrote. It is the beauty of his character — its charity and tenderness, its capacity for lifelong sacrifice and devotion, fruits of the discipline it had undergone — that constitutes the soil which nourished even the lightest flowers and graces of his style. Lamb had contemporaries and rivals in his own walk, each with rare and attractive gifts of his own, — Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt. We owe much to both of these. Each was endowed with critical faculties of the highest order. Each in his own line has done memorable service in establishing the true canons of literary criticism. Each wrote a style of his own, as perfect for its purpose as can be conceived. Yet neither of these is loved, and lives in men's hearts, like Charles Lamb. The amiability of Leigh Hunt is too merely amiable: it has not its roots in the deep and strengthening earth of human discipline. Hazlitt was altogether wanting in the quality. He showed «light,» but without «sweetness»: without the latter grace no writer can make himself dear to his readers.

Moreover, no writer has ever attained this most enviable distinction except when his own life has been told in minutest detail, either by himself or others. In the instance of Lamb, his writings are in the main personal confidences; and in addition we possess his letters, — the most complete as well as the most fascinating disclosure of a personality in our literature, — as well as having the testimony of «troops of friends.» There is something that wins and touches us all in the frank disclosure of a private history. What would Goldsmith have been to us but for Washington Irving and John Forster; or Johnson without Boswell; or Scott without Lockhart, and the frank and deeply pathetic admissions of his own Journal? The sorrows and the struggles of these widely different men draw us to them. Our delight in all that they have written for us is heightened and sanctified by our pity for the individual man. And this is the reward of the true men, who live out their real selves before us, and therefore are a joy forever; while the men who only *pose*, live their brief hour on the stage and then cease to be!

Alfred Ainger

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

JANUARY 1798

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man:
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like, I paced round the haunts of my childhood:
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother!
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

For some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed:
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

HESTER

WHEN maidens such as Hester die,
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try,
With vain endeavor.

A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate

Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flushed her spirit.

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call: if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool;
But she was trained in Nature's school—
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind;
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,
Ye could not Hester.

ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON AS BORN

I SAW where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work.
A floweret crushèd in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood,
Was in a cradle-coffin lying;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying;
So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb!
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark: ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?
Shall we say that Nature blind
Checked her hand and changed her mind,
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finished pattern without fault?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lacked she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons' long workings sickened)
That should thy little limbs have quickened?

Limbs so firm they seemed to assure
Life of health, and days mature:
Woman's self in miniature!
Limbs so fair they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by.
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry
That babe or mother — one must die:
So in mercy left the stock,
And cut the branch, to save the shock
Of young years widowed; and the pain,
When single state comes back again
To the lone man who, 'reft of wife,
Thenceforwards drags a maimèd life?
The economy of Heaven is dark;
And wisest clerks have missed the mark,
Why Human Buds, like this, should fall,
More brief than fly ephemeral,
That has his day; while shriveled crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones,
And crabbed use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss.
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells and baby clothes;
Coral redder than those lips,
Which pale death did late eclipse;
Music framed for infant's glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee:
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,—
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave;
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie,
A more harmless vanity?

IN MY OWN ALBUM

Fresh clad from heaven in robes of white,
A young probationer of light,
Thou wert my soul, an album bright,

A spotless leaf: but thought and care,
And friend and foe, in foul or fair,
Have «written strange defeatures» there;

And Time with heaviest hand of all,
Like that fierce writing on the wall,
Hath stamped sad dates he can't recall;

And error gilding worst designs—
Like speckled snake that strays and shines—
Betrays his path by crooked lines;

And vice hath left his ugly blot;
And good resolves, a moment hot,
Fairly begun—but finished not;

And fruitless, late remorse doth trace—
Like Hebrew lore, a backward pace—
Her irrecoverable race.

Disjointed numbers, sense unknit,
Huge reams of folly, shreds of wit,
Compose the mingled mass of it.

My scalded eyes no longer brook
Upon this ink-blurred thing to look:
Go, shut the leaves, and clasp the book.

IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

From the ‹Essays of Elia›

I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in anything. Those natural repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch.—‹Religio Medici.›

That the author of the ‹Religio Medici,› mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences, in whose categories of being the possible took the upper hand of the actual, should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animals he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself,—earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities,

«Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky,»—

I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices—made up of likings and dislikings—the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards all equally. The more purely English word that expresses sympathy will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or *fellow*. I cannot *like* all people alike.

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me—and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretenses to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them—a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure, and leave it to knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting; waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath, but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bring it to market in the green ear. They delight to impart their defective discoveries as they arise, without waiting for their development. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely.

The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born in panoply. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth — if indeed they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of clockwork. You never catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests anything, but unlades his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness. He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it be true touch or not. You cannot cry *halves* to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian — you never see the first dawn, the early streaks. He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox — he has no doubts. Is he an infidel — he has none either. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no borderland with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him, for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. «A healthy book!» said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to 'John Buncle,' — «Did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body; but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book.»

Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. ——. After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked *my beauty* (a foolish name it goes by among my friends); when he very gravely assured me that «he had considerable respect for my character and talents» (so he was pleased to say), «but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions.» The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him. Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if like virtue it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons, where a son of Burns was expected, and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son; when four of them started up at once to inform me that «that was impossible, because he was dead.» An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character—namely, their love of truth—in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin. The tediousness of these people is certainly provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another. In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot even more than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your «imperfect acquaintance with many of the words he uses»; and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him. Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten nor forgiven for his delineation of Rory and his companion upon their first introduction to our metropolis. Speak of

Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume's History compared with *his* Continuation of it. What if the historian had continued 'Humphrey Clinker'?

I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge is in its nonage. They date beyond the Pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln. Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate on the one side, of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate on the other, between our and their fathers, must and ought to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few fine words, such as «candor,» «liberality,» «the light of a nineteenth century,» can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change; for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as all are beauties in the dark. I boldly confess that I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If *they* are converted, why do they not come over to us altogether? Why keep up a form of separation when the life of it is fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they keck at our cookery? I do not understand these half convertites. Jews Christianizing — Christians Judaizing — puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially *separative.* Braham would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out when he sings, «The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea!» The auditors for the moment are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. Braham has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble delivered dialogue. He would sing the Commandments and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation in general have not over-sensible countenances,—how should they?—but you seldom see a silly expression among them. Gain and the pursuit of gain sharpen a man's visage. I never heard of an idiot being born among them. Some admire the Jewish female physiognomy. I admire it—but with trembling. Jael had those full dark inscrutable eyes.

In the negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards some of these faces—or rather masks—that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller beautifully calls these "images of God cut in ebony." But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good-nights with them—because they are black.

I love Quaker ways and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight or quiet voice of a Quaker acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) "to live with them." I am all over sophisticated with humors, fancies, craving hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whimwhams, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetites are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn) Eve dressed for the angel, my gusto too excited

"To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse."

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity. A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notion of two kinds of truth: the one applicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, «You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath.» Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth — oath-truth — by the nature of the circumstances is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them naturally with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed; and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness exerted against a person has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies might be traced to this imposed self-watchfulness, if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy which never bent or faltered in the primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racking examinations. «You will never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight,» said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law cases with a puzzling subtlety. «Thereafter as the answers may be,» retorted the Quaker.

The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed in lighter instances. I was traveling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straitest nonconformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money and formally tendered it,—so much for tea; I, in humble imitation, tendering mine for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room; the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible; and now, my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited, in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious persons for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sat as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence by inquiring of his next neighbor, «Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?»

DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERY

From the ‹Essays of Elia›

Children love to listen to stories about their elders when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the ‹Children in the Wood.› Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put on one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding.

Then I went on to say how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived,—which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey and stick them up in Lady C——'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "That would be foolish indeed."

And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good, indeed, that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay! and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands.

Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was, and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer (here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave it desisted)—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease called a cancer came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house, and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm"; and how frightened I used to be,—though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she,—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous.

Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren: having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels with the gilding almost rubbed out; sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me; and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then, and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy looking yew-trees or the firs, and picking up the red berries and the fir-apples, which were good for nothing but to look at, or in lying about upon the fresh grass with all the fine garden smells around me, or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth, or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings. I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such-like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant.

Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us, and instead of moping about in solitary corners like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the country in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out,— and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries; and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy,— for he was a good bit older than me,— many a mile when I could not walk for pain; and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again to be quarreling with him (for we quarreled sometimes) rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him as he their poor uncle must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for Uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother.

Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness and difficulty and denial meant in maidens: when suddenly turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding and still receding, till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which without speech strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech:— "We are not of

Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing, less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence and a name.» And immediately awakening, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side; but John L——, (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

A QUAKERS' MEETING

From the ‹Essays of Elia›

Still-born Silence! thou that art
Flood-gate of the deeper heart!
Offspring of a heavenly kind!
Frost o' the mouth, and thaw o' the mind!
Secrecy's confidant, and he
Who makes religion mystery!
Admiration's speaking'st tongue!
Leave, thy desert shades among,
Reverend hermits' hallowed cells,
Where retired Devotion dwells!
With thy enthusiasms come,
Seize our tongues, and strike us dumb!

Rich. Flecknoe.

Reader, wouldst thou know what true peace and quiet mean; wouldst thou find a refuge from the noises and clamors of the multitude; wouldst thou enjoy at once solitude and society; wouldst thou possess the depth of thine own spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species; — wouldst thou be alone and yet accompanied; solitary, yet not desolate; singular, yet not without some to keep thee in countenance; a unit in aggregate, a simple in composite; — come with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

Dost thou love silence deep as that «before the winds were made»? Go not out into the wilderness, descend not into the profundities of the earth; shut not up thy casements, nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears, with little-faithed, self-mistrusting Ulysses. Retire with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

For a man to refrain even from good words and to hold his peace, it is commendable; but for a multitude it is great mastery.

What is the stillness of the desert compared with this place? what the uncommunicating muteness of fishes? Here the goddess reigns and revels. "Boreas, and Cesias, and Argestes loud," do not with their interconfounding uproars more augment the brawl, nor the waves of the blown Baltic with their clubbed sounds, than their opposite (Silence, her sacred self) is multiplied and rendered more intense by numbers and by sympathy. She too hath her deeps that call unto deeps. Negation itself hath a positive more and less, and closed eyes would seem to obscure the great obscurity of midnight.

There are wounds which an imperfect solitude cannot heal. By imperfect I mean that which a man enjoyeth by himself. The perfect is that which he can sometimes attain in crowds, but nowhere so absolutely as in a Quakers' Meeting. Those first hermits did certainly understand this principle when they retired into Egyptian solitudes, not singly but in shoals, to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of incommunicativeness. In secular occasions, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening with a friend sitting by,—say a wife,—he or she too (if that be probable) reading another, without interruption or oral communication? Can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words? Away with this inhuman, shy, single, shade-and-cavern-haunting solitariness. Give me, Master Zimmermann, a sympathetic solitude.

To pace alone in the cloisters or side aisles of some cathedral time-stricken,

"Or under hanging mountains,
Or by the fall of fountains,"

is but a vulgar luxury compared with that which those enjoy who come together for the purposes of more complete, abstracted solitude. This is the loneliness "to be felt." The Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit-soothing, as the naked walls and benches of a Quakers' Meeting. Here are no tombs, no inscriptions—

"sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings;"

but here is something which throws Antiquity herself into the foreground: SILENCE, eldest of things—language of old Night—

primitive Discourser—to which the insolent decays of moldering grandeur have but arrived by a violent, and as we may say unnatural progression.

> "How reverend is the view of these hushed heads
> Looking tranquillity!"

Nothing-plotting, naught-caballing, unmischievous synod! convocation without intrigue! parliament without debate! what a lesson dost thou read to council and to consistory! If my pen treat of you lightly,—as haply it will wander,—yet my spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your custom, when, sitting among you in deepest peace, which some outwelling tears would rather confirm than disturb, I have reverted to the times of your beginnings, and the sowings of the seed by Fox and Dewesbury. I have witnessed that which brought before my eyes your heroic tranquillity, inflexible to the rude jests and serious violences of the insolent soldiery, republican or royalist, sent to molest you,—for ye sate betwixt the fires of two persecutions, the outcast and offscouring of Church and Presbytery. I have seen the reeling sea-ruffian, who had wandered into your receptacle with the avowed intention of disturbing your quiet, from the very spirit of the place receive in a moment a new heart, and presently sit among ye as a lamb amidst lambs. And I remember Penn before his accusers, and Fox in the bail-dock, where he was lifted up in spirit, as he tells us, and "the judge and the jury became as dead men under his feet."

Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you above all church narratives to read Sewel's 'History of the Quakers.' It is in folio, and is the abstract of the Journals of Fox and the primitive Friends. It is far more edifying and affecting than anything you will read of Wesley and his colleagues. Here is nothing to stagger you, nothing to make you mistrust; no suspicion of alloy, no drop or dreg of the worldly or ambitious spirit. You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who perhaps hath been a byword in your mouth), James Naylor: what dreadful sufferings, with what patience he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons, without a murmur; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had fallen into, which they stigmatized as blasphemy, had given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifulest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still! — so different from the practice of your common converts from enthusiasm, who, when they apostatize, *apostatize all*, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths with which they had been mingled, not implicated.

Get the writings of John Woolman by heart, and love the early Quakers.

How far the followers of these good men in our days have kept to the primitive spirit, or in what proportion they have substituted formality for it, the Judge of Spirits can alone determine. I have seen faces in their assemblies, upon which the dove sate visibly brooding. Others again I have watched, when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but a blank inanity. But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity, and the absence of the fierce controversial workings. If the spiritual pretensions of the Quakers have abated, at least they make few pretenses. Hypocrites they certainly are not in their preaching. It is seldom indeed that you shall see one get up amongst them to hold forth. Only now and then a trembling female, generally *ancient*, voice is heard, — you cannot guess from what part of the meeting it proceeds, — with a low buzzing musical sound laying out a few words which "she thought might suit the condition of some present," with a quaking diffidence which leaves no possibility of supposing that anything of female vanity was mixed up where the tones were so full of tenderness and a restraining modesty. The men, for what I have observed, speak seldomer.

Once only, and it was some years ago, I witnessed a sample of the old Foxian orgasm. It was a man of giant stature, who, as Wordsworth phrases it, might have danced "from head to foot equipt in iron mail." His frame was of iron too. But *he* was malleable. I saw him shake all over with the spirit — I dare not say of delusion. The strivings of the outer man were unutterable: he seemed not to speak, but to be spoken from. I saw the strong man bowed down, and his knees to fail; his joints all seemed loosening: it was a figure to set off against Paul preaching. The words he uttered were few and sound: he was evidently resisting his will — keeping down his own word-wisdom with more mighty effort than the world's orators strain for theirs. "He had been a *wit* in his youth," he told us with expressions of a sober remorse. And it was not till long after the impression had begun to wear away that I was enabled, with something like a smile, to recall the striking incongruity of the confession — understanding the term in its worldly acceptation — with the frame and physiognomy of the person before me. His brow would have scared away the Levities — the Jocos Risus-que — faster than the Loves fled the face of Dis at Enna. By *wit*, even in his youth, I will be sworn he understood something far within the limits of an allowable liberty.

More frequently the meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken. But the mind has been fed. You go away with a sermon not made with hands. You have been in the milder caverns of Trophonius, or as in some den where that fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures, the Tongue, that unruly member, has strangely lain tied up and captive. You have bathed with stillness. Oh, when the spirit is sore fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings and nonsense-noises of the world, what a balm and a solace it is to go and seat yourself for a quiet half-hour upon some undisputed corner of a bench among the gentle Quakers!

Their garb and stillness conjoined present a uniformity tranquil and herd-like, as in the pasture,— « forty feeding like one. »

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil, and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily; and when they come up in bands to their Whitsun-conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones.

MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

From the ‹Essays of Elia›

« A CLEAR fire, a clean hearth, and the rigor of the game. » This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game of whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber: who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary who has slipped a wrong card to take it up and play another. These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them as I do, from her heart and soul; and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took and gave no concessions. She hated favors. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight, cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sate bolt upright, and neither showed you her cards nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare under the rose that hearts was her favorite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play, or snuff a candle in the middle of a game, or ring for a servant till it was fairly over. She never introduced or connived at miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand, and who in his excess of candor declared that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do,—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards over a book.

Pope was her favorite author; his 'Rape of the Lock' her favorite work. She once did me the favor to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem, and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, tradrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant, and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles; but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners — a thing which the constancy of whist abhors; the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of spadille — absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter gave him no proper power above his brother nobility of the aces; the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone; above all, the overpowering attractions of a *sans prendre vole*, to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching in the contingencies of whist; — all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game; that was her word. It was a long meal; not like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might coextend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever-fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian States depicted by Machiavel: perpetually changing postures and connections; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath; — but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favorite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage — nothing superfluous. No *flushes*, — that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up: that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and color, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality; pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five-pound stake) because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring "Two for his heels." There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms, — such as pique, repique, the capot: they savored (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate or square. She would argue thus: Cards are warfare: the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war in disguise of a sport: when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves it is too close a fight; with spectators it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play. Three are still worse: a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in tradrille. But in square games (*she meant whist*) all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honor, common to every species; though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold — or even an interested — bystander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game. By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favorite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game, where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue — and here again admire the subtlety of her conclusion — chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself, or before spectators, where no stake was depending? Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number, and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively without a prize? Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of overreaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit—his memory or combination-faculty, rather—against another's; like a mock engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. She could not conceive a *game* wanting the spritely infusion of chance, the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room, whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with insufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of castles and knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly), were entirely misplaced and senseless. Those hard head contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and color. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other; that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards; that cards are a temporary illusion,—in truth, a mere drama—for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet during the illusion we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream fighting: much ado, great battling, and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life which men play without esteeming them to be such.

With great deference to the old lady's judgment in these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget—Bridget Elia.

I grant there is something sneaking in it; but with a toothache or a sprained ankle,—when you are subdued and humble,—you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist.*

I grant it is not the highest style of man; I deprecate the *manes* of Sarah Battle — she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologize.

At such times, those *terms* which my old friend objected to come in as something admissible. I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted her) — (dare I tell thee how foolish I am?) — I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play; I would be content to go on in that idle folly forever. The pipkin should be ever boiling that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over; and as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

LAMENNAIS

(1782-1854)

BY GRACE KING

Hugues Félicité Robert de Lamennais was born at St. Malo in 1782. His family, the Roberts, belonged to the old bourgeoisie of Brittany. The seigneurial termination of De La Mennais came from his father, a wealthy ship-owner, who was ennobled by Louis XVI. for services during the American war. His mother, of Irish extraction, was noted for her brilliant accomplishments and fervid piety. The mother dying when Félicité was but five years old, the child was left by his busy, preoccupied father entirely in the care of an elder brother, Jean, and of an eccentric free-thinking uncle, who lived in the country in his château of La Chenaie. From Jean, Félicité received the rudiments of his education; and almost at the same time, such was his precocity, he acquired in the great library of La Chenaie the erudition of constant and indiscriminate reading. Hence his first misunderstanding by, rather than with, his Church. In the instruction for his first communion, certain points aroused his spirit of discussion, and into the argument with the priest he poured the mass of his ill-digested philosophical reading: the result was that he was refused the communion. It was not until his twenty-second year upon the occasion of his brother Jean's ordination, that he rectified his position and became an active member of his church. Shortly afterward, the two brothers, having inherited jointly La Chenaie from their uncle, retired there. From this retreat, two years later, 1807, appeared Lamennais's first literary essay: a 'Guide Spirituel,' the translation of Louis de Blois's tract the 'Speculum Monacharum.' The translation, perfect in itself, is accompanied by a preface which in pure spirituality of thought and expression equals, if it does not surpass, the original tract. Lamennais himself never afterwards surpassed it. It was his next publication a year later, however, that sounds the

LAMENNAIS

true note, the war-cry of his genius,— his ‘Reflections upon the State of the Church during the Eighteenth Century and the Actual Situation,’— a fierce arraignment of the despotism which held the Church in a cringing position before the government. The book, published anonymously, was promptly suppressed by Napoleon's police. Jean, now Vicar of St. Malo and director of the ecclesiastical seminary there, withdrew his brother from La Chenaie, and gave him the position of professor of mathematics in the seminary, persuading him about the same time to receive the tonsure. In collaboration the two brothers wrote ‘The Tradition of the Church on the Institution of Bishops.’ The downfall of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbons opportunely opening the way to Paris, Félicité went thither with the manuscript. The book came out, but it did not sell.

Polemical by nature, the project of an ecclesiastical journal, a Catholic organ, came to him as a necessity of the hour; but, helplessly dependent upon his brother, he urged him to come to Paris and make the venture a possible one. Jean refused to be diverted from his vocation as parish priest. The return of Napoleon put an end to situation and projects. Lamennais went into exile in London. Friendless and without resources, he was wandering around the streets in search of employment, when he met the Abbé Caron, the dispenser of royal charity to French exiles in London. The Abbé befriended Lamennais, and in the end gained over him an influence similar to that of his brother Jean. As a result of their intimacy, and before the Hundred Days were over, Lamennais was persuaded to take the last step in his profession and become a priest. It is in elucidating this period of Lamennais's life that the publication of his private letters has been of most service to his memory. When he returned to Paris he was ordained priest. Two years later the first volume of his ‘Essay on Indifference in Matters of Religion’ appeared. Its success was instantaneous and immense. To quote Sainte-Beuve: «Its effect upon the world was that of a sudden explosion; the author was bombarded into celebrity by it.» Lamennais was soon surrounded by a party of the most brilliant men among the clergy and laity. The essay, falling into the hands of the law-student Lacordaire, converted him into a student of theology. It must suffice here to state that Lamennais's creed at this time was that of the strictest Ultramontane. Upon the appearance of the second volume, the debate which the first volume caused waxed into a violent tempest of discussion. To satisfy the orthodox an appeal was made to Rome. Lamennais himself went there for a personal interview with the Pope. He was welcomed by Leo XII. as the foremost living champion of the Church; and returned to Paris, encouraged to continue his warfare. He now entered the period of his highest ecclesiastical devotion and his greatest literary activity. He wrote for Châteaubriand's paper the Conservateur, for the Drapeau Blanc, and for the Mémorial Catholique; he published his 'Religion Considered in its Relations to Civil and Political Order,' and his 'Progress of the Revolution and of the War against the Church,' for both of which he was prosecuted and fined; his famous open letters to the Archbishop of Paris appeared.

Lamennais came revolutionized out of the Revolution of July (1830), and joined the Liberals in politics. It was the beginning of the struggle which now took place in his mind between his Ultramontane ideal and his ideal of political liberty. With Montalembert and Lacordaire for associates, he founded the Avenir, which bore for its motto and had for its platform «God and Liberty»; and he organized an *agence générale*, a secular arm to carry its principles into practice. The government, the Gallicans, and the Jesuits combined into an overwhelming opposition against the Avenir; and Lamennais was denounced to the Pope, Gregory XVI., as a modern Savonarola. The Avenir was ordered to suspend; the editors obeyed, starting immediately for Rome. Lamennais published the account of this journey years afterwards; the book furnishes to the religious and political history of the nineteenth century a page that can never lose its value or interest. It is a masterpiece.

After long days of waiting in Rome, an interview was obtained from the Pope upon condition that no allusion should be made to the object of the interview; after another wearisome period of waiting for definite action or response from the Vatican, the pilgrims decided to return to Paris. At Munich the Pope's encyclical overtook them; it condemned political freedom in some of its most essential forms. Lamennais wrote an act of submission to the Pope; but it was not an unqualified pledge of adherence to the encyclical, and of absolute obedience to the Pope in temporal as well as spiritual matters. The Pope in a brief, demanded this. Lamennais hesitated, struggled; the pressure of his most intimate affections was brought to bear upon him; «The arts adopted against him,» writes Mazzini, «constituted a positive system of moral torture.» He signed the act of submission demanded, and retired to his old refuge, La Chenaie. Here a small group of devoted scholars gathered around him; among them was Maurice de Guérin, who has described the place and the master in his letters. Before the year was over, the 'Words of a Believer' appeared in print. Its effect also was that of an explosion. Sainte-Beuve, who superintended the publication of it, found the printers abandoning their work at it, awe-struck by reading the pages. A council of ministers was called. «It is a red cap stuck on a cross,» said one; «That book could wake the dead,» said the Archbishop oi

Paris. Guizot demanded the prosecution of the author; the insane asylum was suggested. A hundred thousand copies were sold immediately; it was translated into all European languages. Gregory XVI. condemned its contents as «falsas, calumniosas, temerarias, . . . impias, scandalosas, erroneas.» In Mazzini's words: «The priest of the Romish Church became the priest of the church universal.»

'Modern Slavery,' the 'Book of the People,' 'Politics for the People,' followed. A paper on 'The Country and the Government' cost Lamennais three months' imprisonment. For eighteen years he now fought with incessant activity in the ranks of the Radicals, and contributed to the most pronounced Radical papers. He served in the Constituent Assembly, and as member of the Committee on Constitution drew up a draught that was rejected as too radical. He changed the aristocratic form of his name into the familiar Lamennais. The Coup d'Etat of Napoleon, by destroying all hopes of political liberty, freed him from politics; as the encyclical of the Pope, by destroying all hopes of religious liberty, freed him from the Church. Estranged friends, resentful pride, straitened resources, and ill health, are the private chronicle of his life of retirement; during which he employed his indefatigable mind upon a 'Sketch of Philosophy' in four volumes, and a translation of Dante.

In January 1854, seized with his last illness, he expired, surrounded by a few devoted friends, who enforced his orders against priestly visits. According to his instructions, no religious services were held over his body; he was conveyed to the cemetery in the hearse of the city poor, and was buried in the common trench, no cross or name marking the spot. Twenty thousand people, headed by Lamartine, Béranger, and Cousin, followed the funeral.

Grace King

A SPIRITUAL ALLEGORY

It was a dark night; a starless sky hung heavily above the earth like the lid of black marble over a tomb.

And nothing troubled the silence of the night; unless that it were a strange sound, like the light flapping of wings now and again, was audible over city and country.

And then the darkness deepened, and every one felt his heart oppressed, while a shiver ran through his veins.

And in a hall hung with black and lighted by a ruddy lamp, seven men clad in purple, and with heads bound with crowns, were seated on seven iron chairs.

And in the midst of the hall rose a throne built out of bones; and at the foot of the throne, in the form of a footstool, was an overthrown crucifix; and before the throne an ebony table; and on the table a vase full of red and foaming blood, and a human skull.

And the seven crowned men seemed sad and thoughtful; and from the depths of sunken orbits their eyes from time to time emitted sparks of livid fire.

And one of them having risen, approached the throne, tottering as he went, and set his foot upon the crucifix.

At that moment his limbs trembled, and he seemed about to faint. The others looked on silently; they did not make the slightest movement, but an indescribable something crept over their brows, and a smile which is not of man contracted their eyes.

And he who had seemed ready to faint stretched out his hand, seized the vase full of blood, poured some into the skull, and drank it.

And this drink seemed to fortify him.

And he lifted up his head, and this cry burst from his breast like a hollow rattle:—

"Accursed be Christ who has brought back liberty to earth!"

And the six other crowned men all rose together, and all together uttered the same cry:—

"Accursed be Christ who has brought back liberty to earth!"

After which, when they had resumed their iron seats, the first said:—

"My brothers, what can we do to stifle liberty? For our reign is at an end, if his begins. We have a common cause. Let each suggest what seems good to him. Here is my advice: Before Christ came, did any stand before us? His religion has destroyed us. Let us abolish the religion of Christ."

And all answered, "That is true. Let us abolish the religion of Christ!"

And a second advanced toward the throne, took the human skull, poured in the blood, drank it, and then said:—

«We must abolish not only religion, but also science and thought: for science wishes to know what it is not good for us that man should know; and thought is always ready to struggle against force.»

And all answered, «It is true. Let us abolish science and thought.»

And when he had followed the example of the first two, a third said:—

«When we shall have plunged man back into brutishness by taking away religion, science, and thought, we shall have done much; but something will still remain to do. The brute has dangerous instincts and dangerous sympathies. One people should never hear the voice of another people, lest it should be tempted to follow an example of complaint and agitation. Let no sound from without penetrate to us.»

And all answered, «It is true. Let no sound from without penetrate to us.»

And a fourth said:—

«We have our interests, and the nations too have theirs which are opposed to ours. If they were to unite in self-defense, how could we resist them? Let us divide to reign. In every hamlet, every city, every province, let us establish an interest opposed to that of other hamlets, other cities, other provinces. Then all will hate each other, and will not think to unite against us.»

And all answered, «It is true. Let us divide to reign! Concord would destroy us.»

And a fifth, when he had twice filled with blood and twice emptied the human skull, said:—

«I approve all these means; they are good, but inadequate. To create brutes is well; but intimidate these brutes—strike them with terror by an inexorable justice and frightful penalties—if you would not sooner or later be devoured by them. The executioner is the prime minister of a good prince.»

And all answered, «It is true. The executioner is the prime minister of a good prince.»

And a sixth said:—

«I acknowledge the advantage of prompt, terrible, inevitable penalties. Yet there are brave spirits and despairing spirits who brave penalties. If you would govern men easily, soften them by pleasure. Virtue is naught to us; it nourishes force: let us exhaust it by means of corruption.»

And all answered, « It is true. Let us exhaust strength and energy and courage by means of corruption.»

Then the seventh, having like the others drunk from the human skull, with feet on the crucifix, spoke thus:—

« Down with Christ!—there is war to the death, eternal war between him and us. But how can we tear the nations from him? It is a vain attempt. What then shall we do? Listen to me. We must win the priests of God with goods, honors, and power. And they will command the people in the name of Christ to submit to us in all things, whatever we may do, whatever we may order. And the people will believe them; and will obey from conscience, and our power will be stronger than ever before.»

And all answered, « It is true. We must win over the priests of Christ!»

And suddenly the lamp which lighted the hall went out, and the seven men separated in the darkness.

And to a just man, who at that moment was watching and praying before the Cross, it was said: « My day is drawing near. Adore and fear nothing.»

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature› by Jane G. Cooke.

CHAPTERS FROM ‹WORDS OF A BELIEVER›

INTRODUCTORY, TO THE PEOPLE

THIS book was made principally for you; it is to you that I offer it. May it, amid so many ills that are your portion, so many sorrows that bear you down almost without any rest, reanimate and console you a little.

You who carry the burden of the day, I would that it might be to your poor tired souls what, at midday in the corner of a field, the shade of a tree—no matter how stunted it may be—is to one who has worked all the morning under the hot rays of the sun.

You are living in evil times, but these times will pass away. After the rigors of winter, Providence sends a season less rude; and the little bird blesses in his morning songs the beneficent hand which has returned to him warmth and abundance, his companion and soft nest.

Hope and love. Hope softens all things; and love renders all things easy. There are at this moment men who are suffering much because they have loved you much. I their brother, I have written the account of what they have done for you, and what has been done against them on account of it; and when violence shall have worn itself out I shall publish it, and you will read then with tears less bitter, and you also will love these men who have so loved you. At present, if I should speak to you of their love and of their sufferings, I should be thrown into the dungeon with them. I would descend into it with great joy if your misery could thereby be lightened a little; but you would not recover any ease from it, and that is why it is better to wait and pray God that he shorten the trial. Now it is men who judge and strike; soon it will be He who will judge. Happy those who see his justice!

I am old: listen to the words of an old man. The earth is sad and dried up, but it will turn green again. The breath of the wicked will not eternally pass over it, like a wind that blasts.

What is being done, Providence wishes should be done for your instruction, so that you may learn to be good and just when your hour comes. When those who make an abuse of power shall have passed before you, like the mud of the running gutters in a day of storms, then you will understand that good alone is durable, and you will fear to soil the air which the breath of heaven has purified.

Prepare your souls against that time, for it is not far off,—it nears.

Christ, laid upon the cross, has promised to deliver you. Believe in his promise: and to hasten its fulfillment, reform that which needs reformation within you; exercise yourselves in all virtues, and love one another, as the Savior of the human race loved you till his death.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Glory to God in the highest of heaven, and peace on earth to men of good-will.

The Father begot the Son, his Word, his Verb: and the Verb became flesh, and dwelt amongst us; and it came into the world, and the world knew it not.

The Son promised to send the consoling Spirit, which proceeds from the Father and himself, and which is their mutual love: it will come and renew the face of the earth, and it will be like a second creation.

Eighteen centuries ago the Verb scattered the divine seed, and the Holy Spirit fertilized it. Men saw it flourish; they tasted the fruit, the fruit of the Tree of Life, replanted in their poor habitations. I tell you there was a great joy among them when they saw the light appear, and felt themselves all penetrated by a celestial fire.

At present the earth has again become cloudy and cold.

Our fathers saw the sun decline. As it descended below the horizon, the whole human race thrilled. Then there was in that night I do not know what; it has no name. Children of the night, the west is black but the orient begins to lighten.

II

Lend your ear and tell me whence comes that noise, confused, vague, strange, that one hears on all sides.

Place your hand upon the earth, and tell me why it thrills.

Something that we know not moves inside the world; a labor of God is there.

Is not each one waiting in expectation? Is there a heart that is not beating?

Son of man, mount to the heights and proclaim what thou seest.

I see on the horizon a livid cloud; and around, a red light like the reflection from a conflagration.

Son of man, what seest thou besides?

I see the seas raising their floods, and the mountains shaking their tops.

I see the rivers changing their courses, the hills tottering and falling and filling up the valleys.

Everything is giving way, everything is moving, everything is taking on a new appearance.

Son of man, what seest thou again?

I see storms of dust in the distance; and they are rolling hither and thither, dashing, breaking, mingling together. They pass over the cities; and when they have passed, naught is seen but the plain.

I see the people rising in tumult, and the kings turning pale under their diadems. War is between them; a war to the death.

I see a throne, two thrones, broken into pieces, and the people scattering the fragments over the earth.

I see a people fighting as the archangel Michael fought against Satan. His blows are terrible, but he is naked, and his enemy is covered with thick armor. O God! He is fallen; he is struck to the death. No! he is but wounded; Mary, the virgin mother, throws her cloak over him, smiles upon him, and carries him for a while out of the fight.

I see another people struggling without a pause, and gaining minute by minute new force in the struggle. This people bear the sign of Christ over the heart.

I see a third one, upon which six kings have put the foot; and every time he moves, six poniards are plunged into his breast.

I see upon a vast edifice, at a great height up in the air, a cross which I can barely distinguish, because it is covered with a black veil.

Son of man, what seest thou yet again?

I see the Orient, troubled within itself. It sees its antique palaces falling, its old temples crumbling into dust, and it lifts its eyes as if to seek other grandeurs and another God.

I look towards the Occident: A woman with a proud eye and serene face; she traces with a firm hand a light furrow; and wherever the plowshare has passed I see arising new generations, who invoke her in their prayers and bless her in their hymns.

I see in the North, men whose only remaining heat is concentrated in their heads, and it intoxicates them; but Christ is touching them with his cross, and their hearts are beginning to beat again.

I see in the South, races bowed down under I know not what malediction; a heavy yoke is bearing upon them: but Christ is touching them with his cross, and they are straightening up again.

Son of man, what seest thou still?

He does not answer: let us call again:—

Son of man, what seest thou?

I see Satan flying, and Christ surrounded by angels coming to reign.

V

When you see a man conducted to prison, or to execution, do not hasten to say, "That is a wicked man, who has committed a crime against men." For perhaps he is a good man, who wished to serve men, and is being punished for it by their oppressors.

When you see a people laden with chains and delivered to the executioner, do not hasten to say, "That is a violent people, who wished to trouble the peace of the earth." For perhaps it is a martyr people, dying for the salvation of human kind.

Eighteen centuries ago, in a city of the East, the pontiffs and king of the day nailed upon a cross, after having scourged him with rods, a rebel, a blasphemer, as they called him.

The day of his death there was a great terror in hell, and a great joy in heaven.

For the blood of the Just had saved the world.

VIII

In the beginning, labor was not necessary for man to live; the earth of itself supplied all his needs.

But man did evil; and as he revolted against God, the earth revolted against him. It came to pass to him then as it comes to pass to the child that revolts against his father: the father recalled his love from him, abandoning him to himself; and the servants of the house refusing to serve him, he has had to go out to seek here and there his poor life, eating bread earned by the sweat of his brow.

Since then, God has condemned all men to labor, and all have their work to do, either of the body or of the mind; and those who say "I shall not work," are the most miserable.

For as worms devour the corpse, so do vices devour them; and if it is not vices it is ennui.

And when God wanted man to go to work, he hid a treasure for him in the work; for he is a father, and the love of a father never dies.

And to him who makes good use of this treasure, and does not foolishly waste, there comes to him a true rest; and then he is as men were at the beginning.

And God gave them also this precept: "Aid one another; for there are among you some stronger, some weaker, some sickly, some healthy; and nevertheless they all must live. And if you act thus to one another, all will live; because I will recognize the pity that you had for your brother, and I shall make the sweat of your brow fertile.»

And that which God promised has always been verified, and never has he who aids his brothers been seen to lack bread.

Now there was once a wicked man, and cursed of Heaven. And this man was strong and hated work; so that he said, «How shall I do? If I do not work I shall die, and work is unendurable to me!» . . . .

Then a thought came from hell into his heart. He went by night, and seizing some of his brothers while they slept, he put them in chains. «For,» said he, «I will force them with rods and with the whip to work for me, and I will eat the fruit of their work.»

And he did as he thought; and others seeing this, did likewise: and there were no longer any brothers, there were masters and slaves.

It was a day of mourning upon all the earth.

A long time afterwards there was another man, more wicked than the first and more cursed of Heaven.

Seeing that men had multiplied everywhere, and that their multitude was innumerable, he said to himself: «I might well perhaps enchain some of them, and force them to work for me; but I should have to nourish them, and that would diminish my gain. Let me do better: let them work for nothing; they will die, in truth, but as their number is great, I shall amass riches before it greatly diminishes, and there will always be enough of them left over.»

And now all this multitude lived upon what it received in exchange for its labor.

Having spoken thus to himself, the man addressed himself more particularly to a few, and he said to them: «You work six hours, and you are given a piece of money for your work: work for twelve hours and you will gain two pieces of money, and you will live much better,—you, your wife, and your children.»

And they believed him.

And he told them again: «You work only half the days of the year: work all the days of the year, and your gain will be double.»

And they believed him again.

And it came to pass from this, that the quantity of work having become greater by half, without the need of the work becoming greater, half of those who formerly lived from their labor found no longer any one to employ them.

Then the wicked man whom they believed said to them: «I will give work to you all, on the condition that you work the same length of time, and that I pay you but half of what I formerly paid you; for I am very willing to do you a service, but I do not wish to ruin myself.»

And as they were hungry,—they, their wives, and their children,—they accepted the proposition of the wicked man, and they blessed him; «for,» said they, «he is giving us life.»

And always continuing to deceive them in the same way, the wicked man ever increased their work and ever diminished their salary.

And they died for the want of the necessities of life, and others hastened forward to replace them; for indigence had become so great in the country that whole families sold themselves for a piece of bread.

And the wicked man who had lied to his brothers amassed more riches than the wicked man who had enchained them.

The name of the one is Tyrant; the other has no name except in hell.

XII

When one of you suffers an injustice, when on his road across the world the oppressor throws some one down and puts a foot upon him, no one hears him if he complains.

The cry of the poor ascends to God, but it does not reach the ear of man.

And I asked myself: «Whence comes this evil? Is it that He who has created the poor as well as the rich, the weak as well as the strong, has wished to take from the one all fear in their iniquities from the others all hope in their misery?»

And I saw that this was a horrible thought, a blasphemy against God.

It is because each one of you loves himself alone, because each is separated from his brother, because each is alone and wishes to be alone, his complaint is not heard. . . .

In the spring, when everything revives, there comes out of the grass a sound which arises like a long murmur.

This sound, formed of so many sounds that they cannot be counted, is the voice of an innumerable number of poor little imperceptible creatures. Alone, not one of them could be heard; all together, they make themselves heard. You also are hidden in the grass: why does no voice arise from it?

But if any one has committed an injustice against you, commence by banishing all sentiment of hatred from your heart, and then, lifting your hands and your eyes above, say to your Father who is in Heaven: « O Father, thou art the protector of the innocent and the oppressed; for it is thy love that has created the world, and it is thy justice that governs it.

« Thou wishedst that it should reign upon the earth, and the wicked man opposes his evil will. That is why we had determined to fight the wicked.

« O Father! give counsel and help to our minds, and strength to our arms! »

When you have thus prayed from the depths of your soul, fight and fear nothing.

XV

You have but one day to pass upon the earth: order it so that you may pass it in peace.

Peace is the fruit of love; for love lies at the bottom of pure hearts as the drop of dew in the calyx of a flower.

Oh, if you knew what it was to love!

You say that you love, and many of your brothers lack bread to sustain life; clothing to cover their naked limbs; a roof to shelter them; a handful of straw to sleep upon; while you have abundance of everything.

You say that you love, while there are sick ones in great numbers, languishing on their wretched couches without help; unhappy ones weeping, and no one to weep with them; little children going about all stiff with cold, from door to door, asking the rich for a crumb of bread from their tables, and not getting it.

You say that you love your brothers; and what would you do if you hated them?

XXIII

Lord, we cry unto thee, from the depths of our misery, like animals who lack pasture for their little ones.

We cry unto thee, Lord!

Like the sheep robbed of its lamb,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

Like the dove seized by the vulture,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the gazelle in the claw of the tiger,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the bull exhausted and bleeding under the shaft,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the wounded bird that the dog pursues,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the swallow faltering from weariness, as it crosses the seas and struggles in the waves,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As travelers lost in a burning desert, without water,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the shipwrecked on a sterile coast,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As he who in the night, near a cemetery, meets some hideous spectre,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the father ravished of the bread he is taking his starving children,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the prisoner whom unjust power has thrown into a dungeon dark and dank,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the slave torn by the whip of his master,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the innocent led to execution,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the people of Israel in the land of bondage,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the descendants of Jacob, whose eldest sons the King of Egypt caused to be drowned in the Nile,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the Twelve Tribes, of whom the oppressor increased the tasks every day, cutting off every day from their food,

We cry unto thee, Lord.

As the Christ upon the Cross, when he said, "My Father! My Father! Why hast thou forsaken me?"

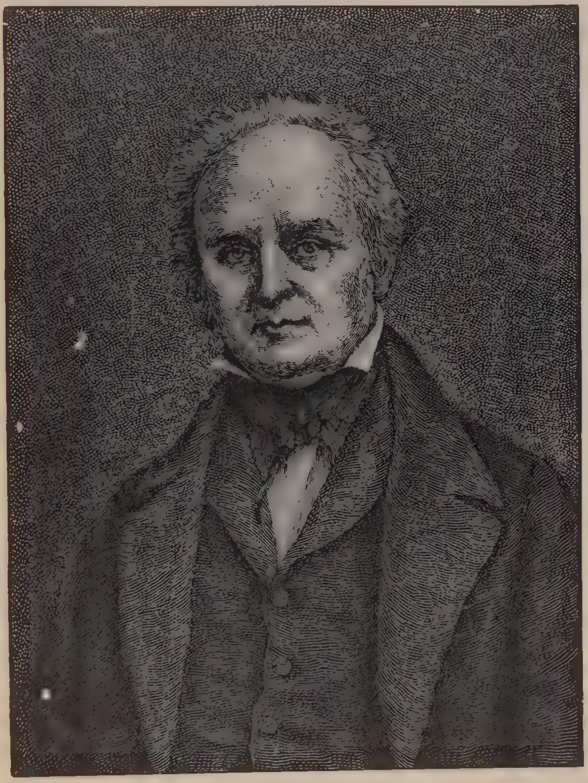
We cry unto thee, Lord.

O Father! Thou didst not forsake thy Son, thy Christ, save only in appearance, and for a moment;

Neither wilt thou ever forsake the brothers of Christ.

His divine blood, which redeemed them from the slavery of the prince of this world, will redeem them also from the slavery of the ministers of the prince of this world. See their pierced feet and hands, their opened side, their head covered with bleeding wounds. In the earth which thou gavest them for a heritage a vast sepulchre has been hollowed out for them; and they have been thrown into it, one upon the other, and the stone of it is sealed with a seal, upon which in mockery thy name is engraved. And thus, Lord, they are buried there; but it will not be for eternity. Three days more, and the sacrilegious seal will be broken, and the rock split asunder; and those who sleep will awaken; and the reign of Christ, which is justice and charity, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, will begin. Amen.

Translated for 'A Library of the World's Best Literature,' by Grace King.



WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

(1775-1864)

BY WILLIAM CRANSTON LAWTON

PERHAPS there is no English author save Gray to whom the epithet «classical» is oftener applied than to Landor. This is not merely a tribute to his mastery of Latin equally with English verse. Even his unrivaled masterpiece, the imaginary correspondence of Pericles and Aspasia, is no mere marvel of learning, no mosaic of remembered details; but rather a great free-hand ideal picture, conforming only to the larger frame of historic fact. Nearly all his work is equally creative, and has a peculiarly *detached* effect, independent of all else whether in reality or fiction, like the best of Hawthorne's imaginings. This unlimited fountain of original though not sustained creativeness is the greatest proof of Landor's genius. Next to it is a style, in all his prose and the best of his verse, so polished, graceful, indeed faultless, that we may at first fail to perceive beneath it the pulse of life, the heat of conscious effort, which is after all essential to the highest enjoyment. This very fact, however, marks the most striking contrast between Landor's art and his outward life. That contrast will to some extent vanish on closer scrutiny of both.

Count no life happy until its close, said Solon. Rarely indeed has a man been born and bred with fairer prospects, lived in more constant turmoil, known greater depths of self-inflicted unhappiness, or spent his last earthly days more utterly forlorn, than Landor. «I never did a single wise thing in the whole course of my existence,» said he near the end of his long life. Too sweeping though this is, we are tempted to cry Amen! It is really incredible that a man endowed with so many virtues, and of such wondrous intellect, should have failed so utterly, and one may say so invariably, to adjust himself to the necessary relations with his fellow-mortals. Yet it is equally certain that he «never did a single» cowardly, cruel, or coldly selfish thing. His life, however, long as it was, seems like the unbroken activity of a volcano. Were his genius less rare and lofty, his later years especially would tempt us to an ignobler comparison; for we are reminded of a piece of firework, occasionally sending a bright star heavenward, but never ceasing to sputter and flare until it burns its own heart out at last!

Landor was the eldest son of a prosperous physician at Warwick. By entail he was assured heir, through his mother, of estates in Warwickshire worth nearly £80,000. Sent to Rugby at the age of ten, he immediately distinguished himself by the quality of his Latin verses. Indeed, his delightful biographer, Sidney Colvin, calls him «the one known instance in which the traditional classical education took full effect.» This does not appear to be a slur on the quality of Professor Jebb's Pindaric odes, or of the Latin hexameters with which Munro supplies the gaps large or small in Lucretius's text. But Landor by lifelong impulse poured forth creative verse quite as rapidly and forcibly, though not quite so faultlessly, in Latin as in English. For satire especially he seems to have preferred the strength of the deathless Roman speech. Much of his English poetry is a reluctant translation from his own classic originals.

When his master gave the school a half-holiday «for Landor's Latin verses,» the boy complained fiercely that his poorest performance was selected for the honor. This belief was expressed in an abusive addition to the copy of verse itself! Similar outbreaks of his Muse finally led to his enforced withdrawal from the school. There, as afterward at college, he always refused to compete for prizes: valuing his own performances too highly to let them be measured at all against rivals' work.

He entered Oxford at eighteen, and was known during his one year there as «the mad Jacobin,» in a time when the French Revolution had frightened even the students of England away from radicalism. His departure in disgrace from Oxford was brought about by a lawless prank. Aggrieved that a Tory neighbor dared entertain socially the same night as himself, he riddled his shutters with a shotgun. His arrival home was signalized by a violent quarrel, at the end of which he left his father's house «forever.»

Until his thirtieth year he had a small allowance, lived partly in a remote corner of Wales and partly at Bath, read hard chiefly in the classics and English poets, and tried his own wings. Love was not one of his chief teachers, though the lady whose name, Jane, is glorified as «Ianthe,» had a lasting influence over him. Resenting Byron's adoption of this beloved title, he declares he

«— planted in a fresh parterre
Ianthe; it was blooming when a youth
Leapt o'er the hedge, and snatching at the stem,
Broke off the label from my favorite flower,
And stuck it on a sorrier of his own.»

Rose Aylmer,— the short-lived daughter of Lord Aylmer,— whose beautiful name has been immortalized in a lyric brief as Catullus and «sad as tear-drops of Simonides,» was Landor's neighbor and friend in Wales. She lent him a book containing the sorry «Arabian» tale which suggested his first important poem. 'Gebir' is a romantic and tragical epic. Into less than two thousand lines of blank verse is packed action enough for an Iliad. It is very hard to follow the plot. The close-knit blank verse is rather too regular also. Still it is a great creative work; chaotic and aimless ethically, but in detail often masterly. It had no readers then save Southey, and few at any time since. Landor said loftily that he would have been encouraged to write more if even foolish men had read it, since «there is something of summer even in the hum of insects.»

'Gebir' has influenced English poetry profoundly, nevertheless. Southey loved it from the first. Shelley, like Charles Lamb, was never weary of repeating certain passages. Of our own contemporaries, Swinburne pours out loyal praise, with his usual lavishness, in the article on Landor in the 'Britannica.' In the same year (1798) appeared the famous 'Lyrical Ballads,' beginning with Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner' and ending with Wordsworth's 'Tintern Abbey.' Either of these has still a thousand readers to 'Gebir's' one. Which was really the weightiest portent of the new day may well be questioned. Landor never sought, and probably never seriously hoped for, wide popularity, even in the future. «I shall dine late,» he says; «but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select.» This fantastic epic by a youth of twenty-three already justified those haughty words; and all the brother poets just mentioned, with a goodly number besides, have testified to its influence upon them. Byron indeed — and others — attempted to appropriate such gems as the verses on the sea-shell:—

«Shake one and it awakens; then apply
Its polisht lips to your attentive ear,
And it remembers its august abodes,
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.»

The year 1808 was like an epitome of Landor's whole life. The wealth recently inherited from his father (the estates being released from entail by special act of Parliament) was all absorbed by a magnificent estate some eight miles in extent, in Monmouthshire. His plans — to build up the ruined abbey of Llanthony which gave the place its name, to erect for himself a goodly mansion, to reclaim the land and reform the peasantry — were all broken in upon by a sudden expedition to Spain, where Landor went campaigning against Napoleon with a regiment equipped at his own expense. Presently the volunteers had all melted away; and their generous patron, having quarreled out with his hosts, his allies, and his superior officers, recrossed the Channel, to resume his denunciation of all in political office and his strife with every one within five leagues of his estate.

The chief fruit of his Spanish tour was the tragedy 'Count Julian.' Like his other plays, it is quite unsuited to the stage. The hero, who turns against his king to avenge his daughter, is a careful psychological study. The drama, however, like all Landor's longer works, is read and remembered, if at all, rather for details, for picked passages, than for its general effect. Mr. Lowell's remark is an acute one,—that Landor is hardly a great thinker, though he has certainly uttered adequately great thoughts. He lacks the longer, the lasting inspiration, that merges all the exquisite detail of an 'Othello' or of a 'Prometheus' in the resistless sweep of the master's design. When he *is* for the moment indeed inspired, his perfect command of style, of utterance, carries him with perfect ease to a height where he has absolutely no masters.

As we are trying to indicate, Landor's life and his work help to explain each other—and both need explanation. His marriage was perhaps his gravest mistake. He fell in love with a stranger's pretty face, and instantly avowed his choice. He married a few weeks later, in 1811. The bride was sixteen years younger than he; and not content with quarrels of his creating, seems to have started them forever after, at will, by taunting him on his age! Whether any woman could have guided this stormy nature through life may be doubted.

By 1814 he had sunk £70,000 in his estate, and fled from England to escape his creditors. Llanthony passed into his mother's wise control. She was able to meet all demands, make provision for the support of Landor's family, and transmit the estate much improved to his posterity. Even upon his southward flight he parted in anger with his wife at Jersey, and hurried to France alone in an oyster-boat! But the «irrevocable» breach was closed within a year.

During the next two decades Landor lived almost wholly in Italy, chiefly in Florence and Fiesole. This is the happiest period of his career, and probably his warmest admirers wish it had been the last. The works also on which his fame rests most secure are the fruit of this epoch. The 'Imaginary Conversations' cover an astonishingly wide range in ancient and modern life. Though an untiring reader, Landor had not by any means an encyclopædic memory in matters historical or biographical. He owned at any one time few books; for though he bought many, he gave them away no less eagerly. His dramatic scenes are not in the least mosaics pieced together from «authorities» or «sources.» On the contrary, he chose by deliberate preference events which *might* have occurred, but were quite unrecorded; and he austerely refused to lay upon his interlocutors' lips any single sentiment or thought save what he believed to be original with himself!

The elemental impulses of Landor's nature were generous, and not ignoble. He had thirteen pitched battles as a schoolboy, and won eleven; but they were all against older boys, and probably waged to put down bullying. He once threw his cook out of the kitchen window; but put his head out instantly thereafter, exclaiming ruefully, «My God! I forgot the violets!» Not only toward flowers but toward all animals he was humane to the point of eccentricity. He would not shoot any living creature, nor even hook a fish. Profuse as he was in unwise giving, unable to resist playing the generous patron whether himself penniless or prosperous, his own needs were of the simplest. Even his fiercest quarrels were rarely in behalf of his own rights; and many of the most threatening outbreaks vanished in peals of uproarious and most infectious laughter, whenever his sense of humor could be touched before his stubborn pride was too firmly set.

Of course, Landor's life in Italy was by no means a monotonously peaceful one. He had to flee from more than one resting-place «for speaking ill of authorities,» preferably in scurrilous Latin verse. The current Italian remark quoted about him is perhaps too delicious to be merely true: «Tutti gli Inglesi sono pazzi, ma questo poi!» (All the English are crazy, but oh — this one!) Had he died at sixty, in the bosom of his family, in his lovely Fiesolan villa, he would have left not only the ‹Conversations,› but the ‹Examination of Shakespeare,› the ‹Pentameron,› and even the greater part of his perfect masterpiece, ‹Pericles and Aspasia.› These three may all be regarded, indeed, as Imaginary Conversations which have burst the lesser frame.

It is generally said that the heat and turmoil of Landor's outward life are absent from his literary creations. In some degree this is certainly true. His workmanship — above all, the finished detail in word and phrase — gives a certain sculpturesque calm and coolness to his work. Nevertheless, his fierce hatred of tyranny and of brutal selfishness, his tender sympathy with helpless innocence, may be felt throbbing beneath every word of such scenes as Henry VIII.'s last interview with Anne Boleyn. There is no purer patriot than the dying Marcellus, who gives his generous foeman Hannibal a new conception of Roman character. Polybius, as he rides in sad triumph through burning Carthage, receives from the vanquished an awful lesson in retributive justice. The womanly tenderness of Godiva is set in a dazzling light which makes the last laureate's graceful verses seem tame. The sweetness of human destiny is wonderfully touched in the words of Thetis, herself an immortal, when her husband grieves that he grows old: «There is a loveliness which youth may be without, and which the gods want. To the voice of compassion not a shell in all the ocean is attuned; and no tear ever dropped upon Olympus."

The happiest subject and the most perfect execution, however, must be sought in 'Pericles and Aspasia.' While largely true to the outlines as we know them from Thucydides and others, this is still a creative romance, depicting adequately a noble attachment which ended only with life.

It is with the greater reluctance, therefore, with pity, and even with bewilderment, that we recall how, in the very days when this supreme and happy masterpiece was approaching completion, the sixty-year-old Landor deserted his wife and children in Fiesole, and after a few months' leisurely sojourn in other parts of Italy, passed on with little evidence of regret to England. The quarrel was in its origin almost trivial. Mrs. Landor, we are told, had indulged once too often in the lifelong habit of criticizing her husband in the children's presence! He indulged, we believe, in no abusive Latin verses on this occasion. He promptly stripped himself of nearly his entire income, leaving the deserted family in comparative affluence; but all the well-meant intercession of friends proved vain. He established a modest home in England. Some stanch friends remained to him. His literary career was by no means ended; indeed, his fame grew in the next decade.

Twenty-three years later, quite penniless, fleeing from the disastrous results of an ignoble libel, the incorrigible octogenarian schoolboy arrived, wild-eyed and combative as ever, at his own gate! After repeated quarrels had made his longer stay there impossible, Mr. Browning took the old lion under his protection. Prosperous brothers in England provided a modest pension. In these days Swinburne made a pilgrimage to Italy expressly to see his revered master; and among the most faithful to the end, Kate Field has an honored place.

Some of our judgments on Landor's character as man and poet we have already attempted to deliver. Yet the Titanic, the elemental type of humanity is peculiarly difficult for ephemeral man to see fairly or to describe rationally. The mistakes and sins of Landor's career seem unpardonable. Yet a thousand incidents prove him the tenderest, the most self-sacrificing — we had nearly said the most heroic — of men. His life was not, we incline to believe, even unhappy upon the whole. Certainly it was most fruitful. A sort of dæmonic good fortune, indeed, seemed to attend him and his. Even his great Welsh estate was not actually ruined, after all, by his early extravagance. His family was not disgraced, nor plunged into poverty, by his desertion twenty years later.

As for his literary creations, his proudly modest prediction seems already more than fulfilled. He himself saw the scattered children of his genius gathered up in two tall octavos in 1846. The fuller library edition, since his death, and the exhaustive biography, we owe to Landor's faithful friend John Forster. We wish however to refer with especial gratitude to two little books by Sidney Colvin. To the admirable biography in the 'English Men of Letters' the present essayist confesses a heavy debt. Moreover, the 'Golden Treasury' series includes a capital anthology from Landor, culled by the same hand. As we have indicated, our author lends himself better to this treatment than almost any other. We know of no volume which contains more helpful example and suggestion for the aspiring literary artist.

Landor is not one of those single-throated purely lyric natures, like Heine or Burns, whose every utterance comes straight from the singer's own heart. He could enjoy the full development of both sides in an argument. He could realize vividly, and even tolerate patiently, characters with which he was in very imperfect sympathy. In this he reminds us of Browning, or that ancient author whom he signally failed to appreciate, Plato. His sense of poetic limitation would never have permitted so merciless a creation as 'The Ring and the Book.' With a tithe of Browning's or Plato's ethical purpose and staying power, he might have created a really great drama. He has left us, perhaps, nothing which can be set among the *indispensable* masterpieces of humanity. Yet he may always remain, as painters say of Andrea del Sarto, an all-but faultless master of technique, and so, indispensable among the models for his fellow craftsmen.

In spite of much graceful verse, and at least one perfect lyric, Landor seems on the whole to have felt the fixed rhythmical form as a fetter, not as an inspiration. As with Emerson, nearly all his most poetic utterances are in polished prose. In the selections given below, we have endeavored usually to choose passages where Landor speaks in deepest earnest, and with the loftiest purpose.

William Cranston Lawton.

IMAGINARY CORRESPONDENCE OF PERICLES AND ASPASIA

Aspasia to Pericles

I apprehend, O Pericles, not only that I may become an object of jealousy and hatred to the Athenians by the notice you have taken of me, but that you yourself—which affects me greatly more—may cease to retain the whole of their respect and veneration.

Whether, to acquire a great authority over the people, some things are not necessary to be done on which Virtue and Wisdom are at variance, it becomes not me to argue or consider; but let me suggest the inquiry to you, whether he who is desirous of supremacy should devote the larger portion of his time to one person.

Three affections of the soul predominate: Love, Religion, and Power. The first two are often united; the other stands widely apart from them, and neither is admitted nor seeks admittance to their society. I wonder then how you can love so truly and tenderly. Ought I not rather to say I *did* wonder? Was Pisistratus affectionate? Do not be angry. It is certainly the first time a friend has ever ventured to discover a resemblance, although you are habituated to it from your opponents. In these you forgive it: do you in me?

Pericles to Aspasia

Pisistratus was affectionate; the rest of his character you know as well as I do. You know that he was eloquent, that he was humane, that he was contemplative, that he was learned; that he not only was profuse to men of genius, but cordial, and that it was only with such men he was familiar and intimate. You know that he was the greatest, the wisest, the most virtuous, excepting Solon and Lycurgus, that ever ruled any portion of the human race. Is it not happy and glorious for mortals, when instead of being led by the ears under the clumsy and violent hand of vulgar and clamorous adventurers, a Pisistratus leaves the volumes of Homer and the conversation of Solon for them?

We may be introduced to Power by Humanity, and at first may love her less for her own sake than for Humanity's; but by degrees we become so accustomed to her as to be quite uneasy without her.

Religion and Power, like the Caryatides in sculpture, never face one another; they sometimes look the same way, but oftener stand back to back.

We will argue about them one at a time, and about the other in the triad too: let me have the choice.

Aspasia to Pericles

We must talk over again the subject of your letter; no, not talk, but write about it.

I think, Pericles, you who are so sincere with me are never quite sincere with others. You have contracted this bad habitude from your custom of addressing the people. But among friends and philosophers, would it not be better to speak exactly as we think, whether ingeniously or not? Ingenious things, I am afraid, are never perfectly true: however, I would not exclude them, the difference being wide between perfect truth and violated truth; I would not even leave them in a minority; I would hear and say as many as may be, letting them pass current for what they are worth. Anaxagoras rightly remarked that Love always makes us better, Religion sometimes, Power never.

Aspasia to Pericles

Never tell me, O my Pericles, that you are suddenly changed in appearance. May every change of your figure and countenance be gradual, so that I shall not perceive it; but if you really are altered to such a degree as you describe, I must transfer my affection — from the first Pericles to the second. Are you jealous? If you are, it is I who am to be pitied, whose heart is destined to fly from the one to the other incessantly. In the end it will rest, it shall, it must, on the nearest. I would write a longer letter; but it is a sad and wearisome thing to aim at playfulness where the hand is palsied by affliction. Be well; and all is well: be happy; and Athens rises up again, alert and blooming and vigorous, from between war and pestilence. Love me; for love cures all but love. How can we fear to die, how can we die, while we cling or are clung to by the beloved?

PERICLES TO ASPASIA

THE pestilence has taken from me both my sons. You, who were ever so kind and affectionate to them, will receive a tardy recompense in hearing that the least gentle and the least grateful did acknowledge it.

I mourn for Paralos because he loved me; for Xanthippos because he loved me not.

Preserve with all your maternal care our little Pericles. I cannot be fonder of him than I have always been; I can only fear more for him.

Is he not with my Aspasia? What fears then are so irrational as mine? But oh! I am living in a widowed house, a house of desolation; I am living in a city of tombs and torches, and the last I saw before me were for my children.

PERICLES TO ASPASIA

IT IS right and orderly, that he who has partaken so largely in the prosperity of the Athenians should close the procession of their calamities. The fever that has depopulated our city returned upon me last night, and Hippocrates and Acron tell me that my end is near.

When we agreed, O Aspasia, in the beginning of our loves, to communicate our thoughts by writing, even while we were both in Athens, and when we had many reasons for it, we little foresaw the more powerful one that has rendered it necessary of late. We never can meet again: the laws forbid it, and love itself enforces them. Let wisdom be heard by you as imperturbably, and affection as authoritatively, as ever; and remember that the sorrow of Pericles can arise but from the bosom of Aspasia. There is only one word of tenderness we could say, which we have not said oftentimes before; and there is no consolation in it. The happy never say, and never hear said, farewell.

Reviewing the course of my life, it appears to me at one moment as if we met but yesterday; at another as if centuries had passed within it,—for within it have existed the greater part of those who, since the origin of the world, have been the luminaries of the human race. Damon called me from my music to look at Aristides on his way to exile; and my father pressed the wrist by which he was leading me along, and whispered in my ear: "Walk quickly by; glance cautiously; it is there Miltiades is in prison."

In my boyhood Pindar took me up in his arms, when he brought to our house the dirge he had composed for the funeral of my grandfather; in my adolescence I offered the rites of hospitality to Empedocles; not long afterward I embraced the neck of Æschylus, about to abandon his country. With Sophocles I have argued on eloquence; with Euripides on polity and ethics; I have discoursed, as became an inquirer, with Protagoras and Democritus, with Anaxagoras and Meton. From Herodotus I have listened to the most instructive history, conveyed in a language the most copious and the most harmonious;—a man worthy to carry away the collected suffrages of universal Greece; a man worthy to throw open the temples of Egypt, and to celebrate the exploits of Cyrus. And from Thucydides, who alone can succeed to him, how recently did my Aspasia hear with me the energetic praises of his just supremacy!

As if the festival of life were incomplete, and wanted one great ornament to crown it, Phidias placed before us, in ivory and gold, the tutelary Deity of this land, and the Zeus of Homer and Olympus.

To have lived with such men, to have enjoyed their familiarity and esteem, overpays all labors and anxieties. I were unworthy of the friendships I have commemorated, were I forgetful of the latest. Sacred it ought to be, formed as it was under the portico of Death,—my friendship with the most sagacious, the most scientific, the most beneficent of philosophers, Acron and Hippocrates. If mortal could war against Pestilence and Destiny, they had been victorious. I leave them in the field: unfortunate he who finds them among the fallen!

And now, at the close of my day, when every light is dim and every guest departed, let me own that these wane before me: remembering as I do, in the pride and fullness of my heart, that Athens confided her glory, and Aspasia her happiness, to me.

Have I been a faithful guardian? do I resign them to the custody of the gods undiminished and unimpaired? Welcome then, welcome, my last hour! After enjoying for so great a number of years, in my public and my private life, what I believe has never been the lot of any other, I now extend my hand to the urn, and take without reluctance or hesitation what is the lot of all.

THE SACK OF CARTHAGE

In a part of the city where the fire had subsided, we were excited by loud cries; rather of indignation, we thought, than of such as fear or lament or threaten or exhort: and we pressed forward to disperse the multitude. Our horses often plunged in the soft dust, and in the holes whence the pavement had been removed for missiles; and often reared up and snorted violently at smells which we could not perceive, but which we discovered to rise from bodies, mutilated and half burnt, of soldiers and horses,—laid bare, some partly, some wholly, by the march of the troop. Although the distance from the place whence we parted to that where we heard the cries was very short, yet from the incumbrances in that street, and from the dust and smoke issuing out of others, we were some time before we reached it. On our near approach, two old men threw themselves on the ground before us, and the elder spake thus: «Our age, O Romans, neither will nor ought to be our protection: we are, or rather we have been, judges of this land; and to the uttermost of our power we have invited our countrymen to resist you. The laws are now yours.»

The expectation of the people was intense and silent: we had heard some groans; and now the last words of the old man were taken up by others,—by men in agony.

«Yes, O Romans!» said the elder who accompanied him that had addressed us, «the laws are yours; and none punish more severely than you do treason and parricide. Let your horses turn this corner, and you will see before you traitors and parricides.»

We entered a small square: it had been a market-place; the roofs of the stalls were demolished, and the stones of several columns (thrown down to extract the cramps of iron and the lead that fastened them) served for the spectators, male and female, to mount on. Five men were nailed on crosses; two others were nailed against a wall, from scarcity (as we were told) of wood.

«Can seven men have murdered their parents in the same year?» cried I.

«No, nor has any of the seven,» replied the first who had spoken. «But when heavy impositions were laid upon those who were backward in voluntary contributions, these men, among the richest in our city, protested by the gods that they had no gold or silver left. They protested truly."

"And they die for this! inhuman, insatiable, inexorable wretch!"

"Their books," added he, unmoved at my reproaches, "were seized by public authority and examined. It was discovered that instead of employing their riches in external or internal commerce, or in manufactories, or in agriculture; instead of reserving it for the embellishment of the city or the utility of the citizens; instead of lending it on interest to the industrious and the needy,—they had lent it to foreign kings and tyrants, some of whom were waging unjust wars by these very means, and others were enslaving their own country. For so heinous a crime the laws had appointed no specific punishment. On such occasions the people and elders vote in what manner the delinquent shall be prosecuted, lest any offender should escape with impunity, from their humanity or improvidence. Some voted that these wretches should be cast amid the panthers; the majority decreed them (I think wisely) a more lingering and more ignominious death."

The men upon the crosses held down their heads, whether from shame or pain or feebleness. The sunbeams were striking them fiercely; sweat ran from them, liquefying the blood that had blackened and hardened on their hands and feet. A soldier stood by the side of each, lowering the point of his spear to the ground; but no one of them gave it up to us. A centurion asked the nearest of them how he dared to stand armed before him.

"Because the city is in ruins and the laws still live," said he. "At the first order of the conqueror or the elders, I surrender my spear."

"What is your pleasure, O commander?" said the elder.

"That an act of justice be the last public act performed by the citizens of Carthage, and that the sufferings of these wretches be not abridged."

GODIVA'S PLEA

GODIVA—Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofric, Leofric! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst — and he will weep at it! he will weep, poor soul! for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family.

Leofric — We must hold solemn festivals.

Godiva — We must indeed

Leofric — Well, then.

Godiva — Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals? Are maddening songs and giddy dances, and hireling praises from particolored coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us; or can his breath make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the blackbird in the garden and do not throb with joy. But, Leofric, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is gladness, it is thanksgiving; it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival: the guests are ready; we may keep it up for weeks and months and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofric, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows from heaven; and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again to him who pours it out here unsparingly.

Leofric — Thou art wild.

Godiva — I have indeed lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love. O my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate; I dare not.

Leofric — We may think upon it.

Godiva — Never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; us never, never afterward.

A DREAM ALLEGORY

Wearied with the length of my walk over the mountains, and finding a soft old molehill, covered with gray grass, by the wayside, I laid my head upon it and slept. I cannot tell how long it was before a species of dream or vision came over me.

Two beautiful youths appeared beside me: each was winged; but the wings were hanging down, and seemed ill adapted to flight. One of them, whose voice was the softest I ever heard, looking at me frequently, said to the other:—

« He is under my guardianship for the present: do not awaken him with that feather.»

Methought, hearing the whisper, I saw something like the feather on an arrow, and then the arrow itself: the whole of it, even to the point, although he carried it in such a manner that it was difficult at first to discover more than a palm's-length of it; the rest of the shaft and the whole of the barb was behind his ankles.

« This feather never awakens any one,» replied he rather petulantly; « but it brings more of confident security, and more of cherished dreams, than you without me are capable of imparting.»

« Be it so!» answered the gentler: « none is less inclined to quarrel or dispute than I am. Many whom you have wounded grievously, call upon me for succor. But so little am I disposed to thwart you, it is seldom I venture to do more for them than to whisper a few words of comfort in passing. How many reproaches on these occasions have been cast upon me for indifference and infidelity! Nearly as many, and nearly in the same terms, as upon you!»

« Odd enough that we, O Sleep! should be thought so alike!» said Love contemptuously. « Yonder is he who bears a nearer resemblance to you: the dullest have observed it.» I fancied I turned my eyes to where he was pointing, and saw at a distance the figure he designated. Meanwhile the contention went on uninterruptedly. Sleep was slow in asserting his power or his benefits. Love recapitulated them; but only that he might assert his own above them. Suddenly he called on me to decide, and to choose my patron. Under the influence first of the one, then of the other, I sprang from repose to rapture, I alighted from rapture on repose — and knew not which was sweetest. Love was very angry with me, and declared he would cross me throughout the whole of my existence. Whatever I might on other occasions have thought of his veracity, I now felt too surely the conviction that he would keep his word. At last, before the close of the altercation, the third Genius had advanced, and stood near us. I cannot tell how I knew him, but I knew him to be the Genius of Death. Breathless as I was at beholding him, I soon became familiar with his features. First they seemed only calm; presently they grew contemplative; and lastly beautiful: those of the Graces themselves are less regular, less harmonious, less composed. Love glanced at him unsteadily, with a countenance in which there was somewhat of anxiety, somewhat of disdain; and cried, « Go away! go away! nothing that thou touchest lives.»

« Say rather, child! » replied the advancing form, and advancing grew loftier and statelier, « say rather that nothing of beautiful or of glorious lives its own true life until my wing hath passed over it.»

Love pouted, and rumpled and bent down with his forefinger the stiff short feathers on his arrow-head; but he replied not. Although he frowned worse than ever, and at me, I dreaded him less and less, and scarcely looked toward him. The milder and calmer Genius, the third, in proportion as I took courage to contemplate him, regarded me with more and more complacency. He had neither flower nor arrow, as the others had; but throwing back the clusters of dark curls that overshadowed his countenance, he presented to me his hand, openly and benignly. I shrank on looking at him so near, and yet I sighed to love him. He smiled, not with an expression of pity, at perceiving my diffidence, my timidity: for I remembered how soft was the hand of Sleep, how warm and entrancing was Love's. By degrees I became ashamed of my ingratitude; and turning my face away I held out my arms, and felt my neck within his. Composure strewed and allayed all the throbbings of my bosom; the coolness of freshest morning breathed around; the heavens seemed to open above me; while the beautiful cheek of my deliverer rested on my head. I would now have looked for those others; but knowing my intention by my gesture, he said consolatorily: —

« Sleep is on his way to the earth, where many are calling him: but it is not to these he hastens; for every call only makes him fly farther off. Sedately and gravely as he looks, he is nearly as capricious and volatile as the more arrogant and ferocious one."

"And Love!" said I, "whither is he departed? If not too late, I would propitiate and appease him."

"He who cannot follow me, he who cannot overtake and pass me," said the Genius, "is unworthy of the name, the most glorious in earth or heaven. Look up! Love is yonder, and ready to receive thee."

I looked: the earth was under me; I saw only the clear blue sky, and something brighter above it.

ROSE AYLMER

Ah, what avails the sceptred race,
Ah, what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

FAREWELL TO ITALY

I leave thee, beauteous Italy! no more
From the high terraces, at even-tide,
To look supine into thy depths of sky,
Thy golden moon between the cliff and me,
Or thy dark spires of fretted cypresses
Bordering the channel of the Milky Way.
Fiesole and Val d'Arno must be dreams
Hereafter, and my own lost Affrico
Murmur to me but in the poet's song.
I did believe (what have I not believed?)
Weary with age, but unopprest by pain,
To close in thy soft clime my quiet day,
And rest my bones in the mimosa's shade.
Hope! Hope! few ever cherisht thee so little;
Few are the heads thou hast so rarely raised;
But thou didst promise this, and all was well.

ART CRITICISM

First bring me Raffael, who alone hath seen
In all her purity heaven's virgin queen,
Alone hath felt true beauty; bring me then
Titian, ennobler of the noblest men;
And next the sweet Correggio, nor chastise
His little Cupids for those wicked eyes.
I want not Rubens's pink puffy bloom,
Nor Rembrandt's glimmer in a dusty room.
With those, and Poussin's nymph-frequented woods,
His templed heights and long-drawn solitudes,
I am content, yet fain would look abroad
On one warm sunset of Ausonian Claude.

LINES FROM ‹GEBIR›

[The first passage here given was Shelley's favorite.]

Once a fair city — courted then by kings,
Mistress of nations, thronged by palaces,
Raising her head o'er destiny, her face
Glowing with pleasure and with palms refresht;
Now pointed at by Wisdom or by Wealth,
Bereft of beauty, bare of ornament —
Stood in the wilderness of woe, Masar. . . .

Now to Aurora borne by dappled steeds,
The sacred gate of orient pearl and gold,
Smitten with Lucifer's light silver wand,
Expanded slow to strains of harmony.
The waves beneath in purpling rows, like doves
Glancing with wanton coyness toward their queen,
Heaved softly; thus the damsel's bosom heaves
When from her sleeping lover's downy cheek,
To which so warily her own she brings
Each moment nearer, she perceives the warmth
Of coming kisses fanned by playful Dreams.
Ocean and earth and heaven was jubilee;
For 'twas the morning pointed out by Fate
When an immortal maid and mortal man
Should share each other's nature knit in bliss.

THE LIFE OF FLOWERS

When hath wind or rain
Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted me,
And I (however they might bluster round)
Walkt off? 'Twere most ungrateful; for sweet scents
Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter thoughts,
And nurse and pillow the dull memory
That would let drop without them her best stores.
They bring me tales of youth and tones of love,
And 'tis and ever was my wish and way
To let all flowers live freely, and all die
(Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart)
Among their kindred in their native place.
I never pluck the rose; the violet's head
Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank
And not reproacht me; the ever-sacred cup
Of the pure lily hath between my hands
Felt safe, unsoiled, nor lost one grain of gold.

A WELCOME TO DEATH

As he who baskt in sunshine loves to go
Where in dim coolness graceful laurels grow;
In that lone narrow path whose silent sand
Hears of no footstep, while some gentle hand
Beckons, or seems to beckon, to the seat
Where ivied wall and trellised woodbine meet:
Thus I, of ear that tingles not to praise,
And feet that, weary of the world's highways,
Recline on moldering tree or jutting stone,
And (though at last I feel I am alone)
Think by a gentle hand mine too is prest
In kindly welcome to a calmer rest.

FAREWELL

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,—
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

ANDREW LANG

(1844–)

Andrew Lang is an active and conspicuous figure among the British writing men whose work belongs in the late nineteenth century. His range has been very wide; his culture is sound, and his individuality has a piquancy which scholarship has not reduced to a pale conformity. When one thinks of Lang, one thinks too of Gosse and Dobson, of Stevenson and Henley,—authors who stand for the main streams of tendency in the newer literature of England.

Andrew Lang

Lang is a Scotchman; one of the many gifted men of letters that wonderful little land has sent down to do literary battle in London. He was carefully educated at Edinburgh Academy, St. Andrews University, and Balliol College (Oxford), laying a solid foundation for his future accomplishment in letters. At Oxford he did brilliant work, and was rewarded by a Merton Fellowship in 1868. Going up to London, he began to write for the periodicals, and soon the first on his long list of volumes was given to the public. This was a volume of verse, 'Ballades and Lyrics of Old France' (1872); containing both translations, and original poems on the same model. Mr. Lang has wooed the Muses at intervals ever since. His poetry shows culture and taste, and has grace and felicity, with a lightness of touch and a ready wit that make it pleasant reading. Along with his friends Dobson and Gosse, he started the imitation of older French verse forms; an exotic cult no doubt making more flexible the technique of English writers, but otherwise having little significance for native poetry. The titles of other of Lang's books of verse indicate the nature of his metrical work: 'Ballades in Blue China,' 'Ballades and Verses Vain,' 'Rhymes à la Mode,' 'Rhymes Old and New,' 'Ban and Arrière Ban';—there is a suggestion of *vers de société* about it all which the contents justify. Now and then Mr. Lang does something of a broader, more imaginative sort; but the general impression of his literary work is that of a polished craftsman and well-equipped scholar rather than a born poet. His poetry does not concern itself with large elemental things; but he can do a light thing very perfectly, and has the good sense not to try to do more.

Lang's restless spirit has also turned occasionally to fiction; his taste leading him towards romanticism, sometimes into melodrama. ‹The Mark of Cain› (1886) has a penny-dreadful atmosphere redeemed by its literary flavor. ‹The World's Desire,› written in collaboration with Rider Haggard, is a striking and skillfully done story in which the romantic myth and legend of Greece are utilized. ‹The Maid of Fife› (1895) is a capital historic tale, with Joan of Arc as the central figure. In this fiction, again, perhaps the scholar and trained worker are more obvious than the literary creator. Yet Lang's art creed, squarely opposed to modern realism and the probing of social problems after the current manner, has affected his own fiction happily; so that it is, to say the least, wholesome and enjoyable.

One of the most fruitful, successful phases of his work has been scholarly editing and translation. He has edited and translated several volumes of foreign fairy tales, of which the ‹Blue Fairy Book› and the ‹Red Fairy Book› are examples; has turned the Greek idyllists Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus into English prose of great beauty; and has given English readers a really superb prose rendering of Homer; the Odyssey in collaboration with Professor Butcher, the Iliad with the help of Messrs. Leaf and Myers. His editing of standard literature has been so extensive that he has been facetiously dubbed editor-in-general to the British nation. A recent example of his more sustained scholar work is the ‹Life of Lockhart› (1896). Mr. Lang, moreover, has been a vigorous student of anthropology; and his volumes ‹Custom and Myth› (1884) and ‹Myth, Ritual, and Religion› (1887) are brilliant and able expositions of the modern theory of the universality of myths among primitive savages, contravening the older theory that certain myths are of exclusive Aryan development. The conservatives have combated his views; which on the contrary receive the warm commendation of a student like Grant Allen.

In his miscellaneous literary papers and lighter critical essays Lang is vastly entertaining. He appears as a free-lance of literature, always ready for a tilt; firm in his belief in the elder classics, and in newer classics like Scott and Dumas; cock-sure of his position, whimsically humorous or pettish, recondite of literary allusion, profuse in the display of learning. The essays are anything but dull, and one acknowledges their liveliness and quality, even if irritated by their tone or in profound disagreement with their dicta.

With this many-sided activity it will be seen that Andrew Lang has a breezy force, is a decided influence in modern English literature. And that influence, in respect of the morbid literary phenomena of the time, has been corrective. Lang has pushed the romantic theory to humorous exaggeration at times; but his main contention for breadth and health and sanity in the presentation of life through art forms is sound enough, and such criticism is especially welcome nowadays.

FROM ‹A BOOKMAN'S PURGATORY›

In ‹Books and Bookmen›

Thomas Blinton had discovered a new sin, so to speak, in the collecting way. Aristophanes says of one of his favorite blackguards, «Not only is he a villain, but he has invented an original villainy.» Blinton was like this. He maintained that every man who came to notoriety had, at some period, published a volume of poems which he had afterwards repented of and withdrawn. It was Blinton's hideous pleasure to collect stray copies of these unhappy volumes, these *péchés de jeunesse*, which always and invariably bear a gushing inscription from the author to a friend. He had all Lord John Manners's poems, and even Mr. Ruskin's. He had the ‹Ode to Despair› of Smith (now a comic writer); and the ‹Love Lyrics› of Brown, who is now a permanent under-secretary, than which nothing can be less gay nor more permanent. He had the revolutionary songs which a dignitary of the Church published and withdrew from circulation. Blinton was wont to say he expected to come across ‹Triolets of a Tribune› by Mr. John Bright, and ‹Original Hymns for Infant Minds› by Mr. Henry Labouchere, if he only hunted long enough.

On the day of which I speak he had secured a volume of love poems which the author had done his best to destroy; and he had gone to his club and read all the funniest passages aloud to friends of the author, who was on the club committee. Ah, was this a kind action? In short, Blinton had filled up the cup of his iniquities; and nobody will be surprised to hear that he met the appropriate punishment of his offense. Blinton had passed, on the whole, a happy day, notwithstanding the error about the Elzevir. He dined well at his club, went home, slept well, and started next morning for his office in the city; walking, as usual, and intending to pursue the pleasures of the chase at all the book-stalls. At the very first, in the Brompton Road, he saw a man turning over the rubbish in the cheap-box. Blinton stared at him, fancied he knew him, thought he didn't, and then became a prey to the glittering eye of the other. The Stranger, who wore the conventional cloak and slouched soft hat of Strangers, was apparently an accomplished mesmerist or thought-reader, or adept, or esoteric Buddhist. He resembled Mr. Isaacs, Zanoni (in the novel of that name), Mendoza (in 'Codlingsby'), the soulless man in 'A Strange Story,' Mr. Home, Mr. Irving Bishop, a Buddhist adept in the astral body, and most other mysterious characters of history and fiction. Before his Awful Will, Blinton's mere modern obstinacy shrank back like a child abashed. The Stranger glided to him and whispered, "Buy these."

"These" were a complete set of Auerbach's novels in English; which, I need not say, Blinton would never have dreamt of purchasing had he been left to his own devices.

"Buy these!" repeated the Adept, or whatever he was, in a cruel whisper. Paying the sum demanded, and trailing his vast load of German romance, poor Blinton followed the fiend.

They reached a stall where, amongst much trash, Glatigny's 'Jour de l'An d'un Vagabond' was exposed.

"Look," said Blinton: "there is a book I have wanted some time. Glatignys are getting rather scarce, and it is an amusing trifle."

"Nay, buy *that*," said the implacable Stranger, pointing with a hooked forefinger at Alison's 'History of Europe' in an indefinite number of volumes. Blinton shuddered.

"What, buy *that*—and why? In Heaven's name, what could I do with it?"

"Buy it," repeated the persecutor, "and *that*" (indicating the 'Ilios' of Dr. Schliemann,—a bulky work), "and *these*" (pointing to all Theodore Alois Buckley's translations of the classics), "and *these*" (glancing at the collected writings of the late Mr. Hain Friswell, and at a 'Life,' in more than one volume, of Mr. Gladstone).

The miserable Blinton paid, and trudged along, carrying the bargains under his arm. Now one book fell out, now another dropped by the way. Sometimes a portion of Alison came ponderously to earth; sometimes the 'Gentle Life' sank resignedly to the ground. The Adept kept picking them up again, and packing them under the arm of the weary Blinton.

The victim now attempted to put on an air of geniality, and tried to enter into conversation with his tormentor.

«He *does* know about books,» thought Blinton, «and he must have a weak spot somewhere.»

So the wretched amateur made play in his best conversational style. He talked of bindings, of Maioli, of Grolier, of De Thou, of Derome, of Clovis Eve, of Roger Payne, of Trautz, and eke of Bauzonnet. He discoursed of first editions, of black-letter, and even of illustrations and vignettes. He approached the topic of Bibles; but here his tyrant, with a fierce yet timid glance, interrupted him.

«Buy those!» he hissed through his teeth.

«Those» were the complete publications of the Folk-Lore Society.

Blinton did not care for folk-lore (very bad men never do); but he had to act as he was told.

Then, without pause or remorse, he was charged to acquire the 'Ethics' of Aristotle in the agreeable versions of Williams and Chace. Next he secured 'Strathmore,' 'Chandos,' 'Under Two Flags,' and 'Two Little Wooden Shoes,' and several dozen more of Ouida's novels. The next stall was entirely filled with school-books, old geographies, Livys, Delectuses, Arnold's 'Greek Exercises,' Ollendorffs, and what not.

«Buy them all,» hissed the fiend. He seized whole boxes and piled them on Blinton's head.

He tied up Ouida's novels in two parcels with string, and fastened each to one of the buttons above the tails of Blinton's coat.

«You are tired?» asked the tormentor. «Never mind: these books will soon be off your hands.»

So speaking, the Stranger with amazing speed hurried Blinton back through Holywell Street, along the Strand and up to Piccadilly, stopping at last at the door of Blinton's famous and very expensive binder.

The binder opened his eyes, as well he might, at the vision of Blinton's treasures. Then the miserable Blinton found himself, as it were automatically and without the exercise of his will, speaking thus:—

«Here are some things I have picked up,—extremely rare,—and you will oblige me by binding them in your best manner, regardless of expense. Morocco, of course; crushed levant morocco, *doublé*, every book of them, *petits fers*, my crest and coat of arms, plenty of gilding. Spare no cost. Don't keep me waiting, as you generally do;» for indeed bookbinders are the most dilatory of the human species.

Before the astonished binder could ask the most necessary questions, Blinton's tormentor had hurried that amateur out of the room.

«Come on to the sale,» he cried.

«What sale?» asked Blinton.

«Why, the Beckford sale; it is the thirteenth day, a lucky day.»

«But I have forgotten my catalogue.»

«Where is it?»

«In the third shelf from the top, on the right-hand side of the ebony bookcase at home.»

The Stranger stretched out his arm, which swiftly elongated itself till the hand disappeared from view round the corner. In a moment the hand returned with the catalogue. The pair sped on to Messrs. Sotheby's auction rooms in Wellington Street. Every one knows the appearance of a great book sale. The long table, surrounded by eager bidders, resembles from a little distance a roulette table, and communicates the same sort of excitement. The amateur is at a loss to know how to conduct himself. If he bids in his own person some bookseller will outbid him; partly because the bookseller knows, after all, he knows little about books, and suspects that the amateur may in this case know more. Besides, professionals always dislike amateurs, and in this game they have a very great advantage. Blinton knew all this, and was in the habit of giving his commissions to a broker. But now he felt (and very naturally) as if a demon had entered into him. 'Tirante il Bianco Valorissimo Cavaliere' was being competed for: an excessively rare romance of chivalry, in magnificent red Venetian morocco, from Canevari's library. The book is one of the rarest of the Aldine Press, and beautifully adorned with Canevari's device,—a simple and elegant affair in gold and colors. «Apollo is driving his chariot across the green waves towards the rock, on which winged Pegasus is pawing the ground»; though why this action of the horse should be called «pawing» (the animal notoriously not possessing paws), it is hard to say. Round this graceful design is the inscription *ΟΡΘΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΗ ΛΟΞΩΣ* (straight and not crooked). In his ordinary mood Blinton could only have admired 'Tirante il Bianco' from a distance. But now, the demon inspiring him, he rushed into the lists, and challenged the great Mr. ——, the Napoleon of bookselling. The price had already reached five hundred pounds.

« Six hundred,» cried Blinton.

« Guineas,» said the great Mr. ——.

« Seven hundred,» screamed Blinton.

« Guineas,» replied the other.

This arithmetical dialogue went on till even Mr. —— struck his flag, with a sigh, when the maddened Blinton had said « Four thousand.» The cheers of the audience rewarded the largest bid ever made for any book. As if he had not done enough, the Stranger now impelled Blinton to contend with Mr. —— for every expensive work that appeared. The audience naturally fancied that Blinton was in the earlier stage of softening of the brain, when a man conceives himself to have inherited boundless wealth, and is determined to live up to it. The hammer fell for the last time. Blinton owed some fifty thousand pounds; and exclaimed audibly, as the influence of the fiend died out, « I am a ruined man.»

« Then your books must be sold,» cried the Stranger; and leaping on a chair, he addressed the audience:—

« Gentlemen, I invite you to Mr. Blinton's sale, which will immediately take place. The collection contains some very remarkable early English poets, many first editions of the French classics, most of the rarer Aldines, and a singular assortment of Americana.»

In a moment, as if by magic, the shelves round the room were filled with Blinton's books, all tied up in big lots of some thirty volumes each. His early Molières were fastened to old French dictionaries and school-books. His Shakespeare quartos were in the same lot with tattered railway novels. His copy (happily almost unique) of Richard Barnfield's 'Affectionate Shepheard' was coupled with two old volumes of 'Chips from a German Workshop' and a cheap, imperfect example of 'Tom Brown's School Days.' Hooke's 'Amanda' was at the bottom of a lot of American devotional works, where it kept company with an Elzevir Tacitus and the Aldine 'Hypnerotomachia.' The auctioneer put up lot after lot, and Blinton plainly saw that the whole affair was a « knock-out.» His most treasured spoils were parted with at the price of waste paper. It is an awful thing to be present at one's own sale. No man would bid above a few shillings. Well did Blinton know that after the knock-out the plunder would be shared among the grinning bidders. At last his ‘Adonais,’ uncut, bound by Lortic, went in company with some old ‘Bradshaws,’ the ‘Court Guide’ of 1881, and an odd volume of the Sunday at Home, for sixpence. The Stranger smiled a smile of peculiar malignity. Blinton leaped up to protest; the room seemed to shake around him, but words would not come to his lips.

Then he heard a familiar voice observe, as a familiar grasp shook his shoulder:—

“Tom, Tom, what a nightmare you are enjoying!”

He was in his own arm-chair, where he had fallen asleep after dinner; and Mrs. Blinton was doing her best to arouse him from his awful vision. Beside him lay ‘L’Enfer du Bibliophile, vu et decrit par Charles Asselineau’ (Paris: Tardieu, MDCCCLX.).

FROM ‘LETTER TO MONSIEUR DE MOLIÈRE, VALET DE CHAMBRE DU ROI’

In ‘Letters to Dead Authors’

Monsieur:

WITH what awe does a writer venture into the presence of the great Molière! As a courtier in your time would scratch humbly (with his comb!) at the door of the Grand Monarch, so I presume to draw near your dwelling among the Immortals. You, like the King who among all his titles has now none so proud as that of the friend of Molière—you found your dominions small, humble, and distracted; you raised them to the dignity of an empire: what Louis the XIV. did for France you achieved for French comedy; and the bâton of Scapin still wields its sway, though the sword of Louis was broken at Blenheim. For the King the Pyrenees (or so he fancied) ceased to exist; by a more magnificent conquest you overcame the Channel. If England vanquished your country’s arms, it was through you that France *ferum victorem cepit*, and restored the dynasty of Comedy to the land whence she had been driven. Ever since Dryden borrowed ‘L’Étourdi,’ our tardy apish nation has lived (in matters theatrical) on the spoils of the wits of France.

In one respect, to be sure, times and manners have altered. While you lived, taste kept the French drama pure; and it was the congenial business of English playwrights to foist their rusti grossness and their large Fescennine jests into the urban page of Molière. Now they are diversely occupied; and it is their affair to lend modesty where they borrow wit, and to spare a blush to the cheek of the Lord Chamberlain. But still, as has ever been our wont since Etherege saw and envied and imitated your successes — still we pilfer the plays of France, and take our *bien*, as you said in your lordly manner, wherever we can find it. We are the privateers of the stage; and it is rarely, to be sure, that a comedy pleases the town which has not first been « cut out » from the countrymen of Molière. Why this should be, and what « tenebriferous star » (as Paracelsus, your companion in the 'Dialogues des Morts,' would have believed) thus darkens the sun of English humor, we know not; but certainly our dependence on France is the sincerest tribute to you. Without you, neither Rotrou, nor Corneille, nor « a wilderness of monkeys » like Scarron, could ever have given Comedy to France and restored her to Europe.

While we owe to you, monsieur, the beautiful advent of Comedy, fair and beneficent as Peace in the play of Aristophanes, it is still to you that we must turn when of comedies we desire the best. If you studied with daily and nightly care the works of Plautus and Terence, if you « let no musty *bouquin* escape you » (so your enemies declared), it was to some purpose that you labored. Shakespeare excepted, you eclipsed all who came before you: and from those that follow, however fresh, we turn; we turn from Regnard and Beaumarchais, from Sheridan and Goldsmith, from Musset and Pailleron and Labiche, to that crowded world of your creation. « Creations » one may well say, for you anticipated Nature herself: you gave us, before she did, in Alceste a Rousseau who was a gentleman, not a lacquey; in a *mot* of Don Juan's the secret of the new religion and the watchword of Comte, *l'amour de l'humanité*.

Before you where can we find, save in Rabelais, a Frenchman with humor; and where, unless it be in Montaigne, the wise philosophy of a secular civilization? With a heart the most tender, delicate, loving, and generous,— a heart often in agony and torment,— you had to make life endurable (we cannot doubt it) without any whisper of promise or hope or warning from religion. Yes, in an age when the greatest mind of all, the mind of Pascal, proclaimed that the only hope was in voluntary blindness, that the only chance was to hazard all on a bet at evens, you, monsieur, refused to be blinded, or to pretend to see what you found invisible.

In religion you beheld no promise of help. When the Jesuits and Jansenists of your time saw, each of them, in Tartuffe the portrait of their rivals (as each of the laughable Marquises in your play conceived that you were girding at his neighbor), you all the while were mocking every credulous excess of faith. In the sermons preached to Agnès we surely hear your private laughter; in the arguments for credulity which are presented to Don Juan by his valet we listen to the eternal self-defense of superstition. Thus, desolate of belief, you sought for the permanent element of life — precisely where Pascal recognized all that was most fleeting and unsubstantial — in *divertissement;* in the pleasure of looking on, a spectator of the accidents of existence, an observer of the follies of mankind. Like the gods of the Epicurean, you seem to regard our life as a play that is played, as a comedy; yet how often the tragic note comes in! What pity, and in the laughter what an accent of tears, as of rain in the wind! No comedian has been so kindly and human as you; none has had a heart like you to feel for his butts, and to leave them sometimes, in a sense, superior to their tormentors. Sganarelle, M. de Pourceaugnac, George Dandin, and the rest — our sympathy somehow is with them, after all; and M. Pourceaugnac is a gentleman, despite his misadventures.

Though triumphant Youth and malicious Love in your plays may batter and defeat Jealousy and Old Age, yet they have not all the victory, or you did not mean that they should win it. They go off with laughter, and their victim with a grimace; but in him we that are past our youth behold an actor in an unending tragedy,— the defeat of a generation. Your sympathy is not wholly with the dogs that are having their day; you can throw a bone or a crust to the dog that has had his, and has been taught that it is over and ended. Yourself not unlearned in shame, in jealousy, in endurance of the wanton pride of men, (how could the poor player and the husband of Celimène be untaught in that experience?) you never sided quite heartily, as other comedians have done, with young prosperity and rank and power.

LES ROSES DE SÂDI

From ‹Ban and Arrière Ban›

This morning I vowed I would bring thee my roses;
They were thrust in the band that my bodice incloses,
But the breast-knots were broken, the roses went free.

The breast-knots were broken: the roses together
Floated forth on the wings of the wind and the weather,
And they drifted afar down the streams of the sea.

And the sea was as red as when sunset uncloses;
But my raiment is sweet from the scent of the roses,—
Thou shalt know, love, how fragrant a memory can be.

THE ODYSSEY

Prefixed to the Butcher-Lang translation

As one that for a weary space has lain
Lulled by the song of Circe and her wine
In gardens near the pale of Proserpine,
Where that Ææan Isle forgets the Main,
And only the low lutes of love complain,
And only shadows of wan lovers pine;
As such an one were glad to know the brine
Salt on his lips, and the large air again,—
So, gladly from the songs of modern speech
Men turn, and see the stars, and feel the free
Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers;
And through the music of the languid hours,
They hear like ocean on a western beach
The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

SIDNEY LANIER

(1842–1881)

BY RICHARD BURTON

The quiet steady widening of the influence of Sidney Lanier since his death is more than a pleasant justification of faith to those who have loved him and believed in him from the first. It suggests the comforting thought that good literature, unconventional in form and original in quality, although for this very reason slower to get a hearing, is sure to receive the eventual recognition it deserves. Sixteen years have elapsed since Lanier's taking-off; and he is now seen more clearly every day to be the most important native singer the Southern United States has produced, and one of the most distinctive and lovely of American singers wherever born. Enthusiastic admirers and followers he has always attracted to him; now the general opinion begins to swing round to what seemed to many, a little time ago, the extravagant encomium of partiality and prejudice.

Sidney Lanier

The circumstances of Sidney Lanier's life furnish a pathetically tragic setting to his pure-souled, beautiful work. A Georgian, he was born at Macon, February 3d, 1842; his father was a well-known lawyer of that city. The family on the male side was of Huguenot French descent; on the maternal side the stock was Scotch. Sidney was educated at Oglethorpe College in his native State. The war found him on the Confederate side; and while a prisoner he consoled his spirit with his beloved flute and wrote fugitive verses,—early pledges of the twin master passions of Lanier's whole life, literature and music. It was while immured thus that he and Father Tabb, the Maryland poet-priest, struck up the friendship which the latter has commemorated in more than one loving song. Lanier's constitution was delicate; and the exposures and hardships of war developed the seeds of the consumption which he fought heroically through young manhood and into middle life, and finally succumbed to. Some years of experimental occupation followed upon the war experience: he was successively clerk, teacher, and lawyer, taking up the legal profession at the earnest instigation of his father, who could not realize that Lanier's vocation was so different from his own. The letter which the son wrote from Baltimore, taking the decisive step that made him a literary man and musician for better or worse, is impressive and revelatory of his character:—

> «I have given your last letter the fullest and most careful consideration. After doing so, I feel sure that Macon is not the place for me. If you could taste the delicious crystalline air and the champagne breeze that I've just been rushing about in, I am equally sure that in point of climate you would agree with me that my chance of life is ten times as great here as in Macon. Then as to business. Why should I—nay, how *can* I—settle myself down to be a third-rate struggling lawyer for the balance of my little life, as long as there is a certainty almost absolute that I can do some other thing so much better? . . . My dear father, think how for twenty years, through poverty, through pain, through weariness, through sickness, through the uncongenial atmosphere of a farcical college and of a bare army, and then of an exacting business life,—through all of the discouragement of being wholly unacquainted with literary people and literary ways,—I say, think how, in spite of all these depressing circumstances and of a thousand more which I could enumerate, these two figures of music and of poetry have kept in my heart so that I could not banish them. Does it not seem to you as to me, that I begin to have the right to enroll myself among the devotees of these two sublime arts, after having followed them so long and so humbly, and through so much bitterness?»

One can well believe that with a man like Lanier, such a choice had in it the solemnity of a consecration. His ideal of Art in the broad sense—whether literary or other—was so lofty that a dedication of himself to the service was the most serious of acts. Nor, through whatever of set-back, stress, and failure, did he for a moment swerve from that ideal; he held himself as a very priest of Beauty, dignifying at once himself and his calling.

Lanier's literary career began with the publishing of a novel, 'Tiger Lilies' (1867), a book founded on his war experiences, and not a success: fiction was not his natural medium of expression. There is luxuriant unpruned imagination in the story, however, and it is evident that a poet in his first ferment of fancy is hiding there. Meanwhile Lanier was sending his poems to the magazines and getting them back again,—the proverbial editor on the lookout for budding genius proving mostly chimerical. Gradually a critic here and there became aware of his worth. 'Corn,' one of his finely representative pieces, appeared in Lippincott's Magazine in 1875, and attracted attention which led to his being employed to write the words for a cantata by Dudley Buck, performed at the Centennial Exhibition in the next year. The Centennial year, too, marks the appearance of the first edition of his poems,—a volume containing tentative immature verse, though promising much to one of critical foresight. The Independent and the Century also opened their doors to the Southern singer. But these chance contributions to periodicals—birds of passage finding a lodgment as it might hap—were grotesquely inadequate for the support of a man with a family;—for so far back as 1867, the year his first book was published, he had married Miss Mary H. Day, also of Macon,—a woman who in all the gracious ministries of heart and home and spirit was his leal mate. Hence was he forced to do hack-work; a sorry spectacle of Pegasus in harness. He could only use his pen between hemorrhages; and the slender financial resources thus heavily taxed would have utterly failed had it not been for the kind ministries of brother and father. Lanier made a guide-book on Florida, as unlike the customary manual as an Arabian blood mare is unlike a dray-horse. He edited Froissart for boys,—a more congenial task; and did youth the same service with respect to King Arthur, the 'Mabinogion,' and Bishop Percy. Brave, beautiful books they are; for the full-mouthed old words and the bygone deeds of chivalry both appealed to the poet-editor. Then in 1879 came what looked like brighter fortune: he was appointed lecturer on English literature at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, to which city he had gone in 1873 to take the position of first flute in the Peabody Orchestra. It must be remembered that to the end music and poetry were the beacon stars in Lanier's overcast, uncertain skies. Now a modest yearly income at least was assured,—for the first time in his experience. The alleviation was but brief; for two years later, in the mountains of North Carolina, whither he had wearily gone to make one more struggle for breath, Sidney Lanier's noble soul was loosened from its frail tenement of flesh, and, his wife beside him, he fell on sleep:—

> «From the contagion of the world's slow stain
> He is secure.»

But that final span of time enabled him to prosecute with diligence and system his favorite studies in the old English literature, and to leave two critical volumes of great value and individuality. 'The Science of English Verse,' published in 1880, is an elaborate and unique analysis of the technical structure and underlying principles of the native metric, developing a new and most interesting theory: that the time quality obtains in English poetry as in music; this thesis being aptly illustrated from the sister art. 'The English Novel and the Principles of its Development,' which appeared three years later, in 1883, is made up of lectures delivered at Johns Hopkins, at a time when Lanier was obliged to sit down while speaking, so weak was he. The book is the most philosophic treatment of the development of our fiction that has been written, seizing upon the central fact of the steady growth of the idea of personality in the novel from Greek days to the present time. It was not until 1884, several years after his death, that his poems were collected finally into a volume, with an admirable introductory essay upon the man and his work by Dr. William Hayes Ward. With this book Lanier came into his own of praise and love.

Lanier's characteristics as a poet — and despite his achievements in prose, it is as a poet he must be considered primarily — are such as to separate him from other American makers of literature. In the first place, his work has the glow and color of the South,— an exuberance of imagination and a rhythmic sweep which awaken a kind of exultant delight in the sensitive reader. A consummate artist, Lanier showed himself a pioneer in the handling of words and metres: his richness of rhymes and alliterations, his marvelous feeling for tone-color, fellow him with an English poet like Swinburne. He opened new possibilities of metrical and stanzaic arrangements, and therewith revealed new powers of word-use and combination in modern English poetry; drawing on the treasures of the older word-hoard which his study, taste, and instinct suggested. He certainly broadened in this way the technic of verse, and on this side of his art was truly remarkable. He was too that rare thing, a song-writer. His 'Song of the Chattahoochee,' 'A Song of the Future,' 'A Song of Love,' 'An Evening Song,' and others, are not only to be read but set to music; they are felt to be songs in the full and literal sense. The fact that he was a trained musician, a maker in the neighbor art, qualified him peculiarly in this respect. The musician helped the poet, the poet enriched the maker of music.

Looking to the essential traits that are to technic as the completed structure to the scaffolding that makes it possible, Lanier was a man of fine culture, much read, assimilative, strong of thought, endowed with sane imagination. He did not take petty conceits or stale and attenuated ideas and deck them out in the fine garments of art: he had the modern zest for fact, and was abreast of the times in his conceptions,— often an intellectual forerunner. On the problems of State, religion, society, science, art, and literature, his words were deep and wise; and his work reveals him as an advanced thinker on the vital themes of his century. And along with this marked breadth and independency of thought went a profound ethical earnestness, having in it a subtle spirituality that above all else makes this poet distinctive and precious. In his own lovely phrase, reversing the wonted words, he believed in the «holiness of beauty»: he perceived that beauty is but one phase of that Triune power, the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, divinely interplaying into each other, never to be dissevered without violence to each and all. Lanier applied the Platonic philosophy to art, and it had for him perfect credence, absolute allegiance.

These gifts and powers, then,—technical mastery, original thought, and spiritual perception and fervor,—are to be recognized in his best poems. In the shorter, simpler lyrics, notice how the characteristic qualities shine out. How full of the broad spirit of worship is the 'Ballad of Trees and the Master'; how valiantly soul rises above the failing flesh in 'The Stirrup Cup'! What a knightly devotion to womanhood is expressed in 'My Springs,' as high a strain as was ever sung to wife! What a hymning of the ideal relation of word and deed is heard in the melodious measures of 'Life and Song'! And when we turn to the larger, more broadly conceived pieces, what a stanch Americanism blows like a sea-wind through the remarkable 'Psalm of the West'; with what exaltation yet fearless fraternity the Christ is glorified in that noble poem, 'The Crystal'; and what a lesson on the mean, sordid standards of trade is preached in 'The Symphony,'—that wonderful creation, which under the allegory of music, is vital with high suggestions for every aspiring soul. Nor must that side of the work in which Nature is limned and worshiped be passed by; for it includes some of the most unforgettable things. Lanier's attitude towards Nature was that of a passionate lover; a pantheist who felt God in everything. 'Clover,' 'From the Flats,' 'Tampa Robins,' 'Corn,' 'The Bee,' 'The Dove,' are poems of this class, and such as have come from no other American singer. They express his loving observation of the picturesque phenomena of his own and other Southern States. They transmute Nature in an ideality which fills the air with voices not of earth, and makes the very grass whisper immortal words.

The culmination of Lanier's art and thought and spiritual force is found in the 'Hymns of the Marshes'; two of which, 'Sunrise' and 'The Marshes of Glynn,' are magnificently imaginative organ-chants of a dying man, never so strong of soul as when his body hung by a tenuous thread to life. The finest of this great series, a majestic swan-song, was written when Lanier lay so weak that he could not lift hand to mouth. And the marvel of it is, that poetry never was made through which pulsed and surged a more puissant vitality. These 'Marsh Hymns' stand among the major productions of modern poetry.

It may be granted that Sidney Lanier in the full tide of plethoric utterance sometimes sacrificed lucidity. His teeming fancy was now and then in surplusage, and ran into the arabesque; though this is not true of his latest work. It is possible, again, that he pushed to an extreme his theory of the close inter-relations of music and verse, claiming for the latter not only lyric but symphonic powers,—a view illustrated to a degree in his Centennial Ode with its verbal orchestration. Poetry is a human product, and subject to human limitations. Had Lanier lived longer, had he had a freer opportunity, doubtless his literary bequest would have been richer and more completely expressive of himself. But as it is, in quality and in accomplishment Sidney Lanier takes his place as an American poet of distinction. He is one of those rare illustrations of the union, in a son of genius, of high character and artistic production in harmony therewith; a spectacle feeding the heart with tender thoughts and pure ideals:—

«His song was only living aloud,
His work, a singing with his hand.»

Richard Burton.

A BALLAD OF TREES AND THE MASTER

From ‹Poems of Sidney Lanier.› Copyright 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier, and published by Charles Scribner's Sons

INTO the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to him,
The little gray leaves were kind to him;
The thorn-tree had a mind to him
When into the woods he came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And he was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When Death and Shame would woo him last,
From under the trees they drew him last;
'Twas on a tree they slew him—last,
When out of the woods he came.

SONG OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE

From ‘Poems of Sidney Lanier.’ Copyright 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier, and published by Charles Scribner's Sons

Out of the hills of Habersham,
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side,
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried, *Abide, abide,*
The willful water-weeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said *Stay,*
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed, *Abide, abide,*
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade; the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold;
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
O'erleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,
Said, *Pass not, so cold, these manifold*
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall.

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook-stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl;
And many a luminous jewel alone—
Crystal clear or acloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet, and amethyst—
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone

In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valley of Hall
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of duty call—
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main;
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall.

TAMPA ROBINS

From 'Poems of Sidney Lanier.' Copyright 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier, and published by Charles Scribner's Sons

The robin laughed in the orange-tree:—
"Ho, windy North, a fig for thee;
While breasts are red and wings are bold
And green trees wave us globes of gold,
Time's scythe shall reap but bliss for me,—
Sunlight, song, and the orange-tree.

"Burn, golden globes in leafy sky,
My orange-planets: crimson I
Will shine and shoot among the spheres
(Blithe meteor that no mortal fears),
And thrid the heavenly orange-tree
With orbits bright of minstrelsy.

"If that I hate wild winter's spite,—
The gibbet trees, the world in white,
The sky but gray wind over a grave,—
Why should I ache, the season's slave?
I'll sing from the top of the orange-tree,
Gramercy, winter's tyranny.

"I'll south with the sun, and keep my clime;
My wing is king of the summer-time;
My breast to the sun his torch shall hold;
And I'll call down through the green and gold,
Time, take thy scythe, reap bliss for me;
Bestir thee under the orange-tree."

EVENING SONG

From ‹Poems of Sidney Lanier.› Copyright 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier,
and published by Charles Scribner's Sons

Look off, dear Love, across the sallow sands,
And mark yon meeting of the sun and sea;
How long they kiss in sight of all the lands:
Ah! longer, longer, we.

Now in the sea's red vintage melts the sun,
As Egypt's pearl dissolved in rosy wine,
And Cleopatra night drinks all. 'Tis done:
Love, lay thine hand in mine.

Come forth, sweet stars, and comfort heaven's heart;
Glimmer, ye waves, round else unlighted sands.
O night! divorce our sun and sky apart—
Never our lips, our hands.

LIFE AND SONG

From ‹Poems of Sidney Lanier.› Copyright 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier,
and published by Charles Scribner's Sons

If life were caught by a clarionet,
And a wild heart, throbbing in the reed,
Should thrill its joy, and trill its fret,
And utter its heart in every deed,

Then would this breathing clarionet
Type what the poet fain would be;
For none o' the singers ever yet
Has wholly lived his minstrelsy,

Or clearly sung his true, true thought,
Or utterly bodied forth his life,
Or out of life and song has wrought
The perfect one of man and wife;

Or lived and sung, that Life and Song
Might each express the other's all,
Careless if life or art were long
Since both were one, to stand or fall:

So that the wonder struck the crowd,
Who shouted it about the land:—
His song was only living aloud,
His work, a singing with his hand!

FROM ‹THE MARSHES OF GLYNN›

In ‹Poems of Sidney Lanier.› Copyright 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier, and published by Charles Scribner's Sons

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding and free
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to the sea!
Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath mightily won
God out of knowledge, and good out of infinite pain,
And sight out of blindness, and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God;
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies:
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh; lo, out of his plenty the sea
Pours fast; full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:
Look how the grace of the sea doth go
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
Here and there,
Everywhere,
Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the low-lying lanes,
And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow
In the rose-and-silver evening glow.
Farewell, my lord Sun!
The creeks overflow; a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass stir;
Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whirr;
Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide is in his ecstasy.
The tide is at his highest height;
And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of sleep
Roll in on the souls of men;
But who will reveal to our waking ken
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when the tide comes in
On the length and the breadth of the marvelous marshes of Glynn.

FROM THE FLATS

From ‹Poems of Sidney Lanier.› Copyrighted 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier, and published by Charles Scribner's Sons

What heart-ache—ne'er a hill!
Inexorable, vapid, vague and chill
The drear sand-levels drain my spirit low.
With one poor word they tell me all they know;
Whereat their stupid tongues, to tease my pain,
Do drawl it o'er again and o'er again.
They hurt my heart with griefs I cannot name:
Always the same, the same.

Nature hath no surprise;
No ambuscade of beauty 'gainst mine eyes
From brake or lurking dell or deep defile;
No humors, frolic forms—this mile, that mile;
No rich reserves or happy-valley hopes
Beyond the bend of roads, the distant slopes.
Her fancy fails, her wild is all run tame:
Ever the same, the same.

Oh, might I through these tears
But glimpse some hill my Georgia high uprears
Where white the quartz and pink the pebble shine,
The hickory heavenward strives, the muscadine
Swings o'er the slope, the oak's far-falling shade
Darkens the dogwood in the bottom glade,
And down the hollow from a ferny nook
Lull sings a little brook!

A SONG OF THE FUTURE

From ‹Poems of Sidney Lanier.› Copyright 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier.
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Sail fast, sail fast,
Ark of my hopes, Ark of my dreams;
Sweep lordly o'er the drownèd Past,
Fly glittering through the sun's strange beams;
Sail fast, sail fast.
Breaths of new buds from off some drying lea
With news about the Future scent the sea;
My brain is beating like the heart of Haste;
I'll loose me a bird upon this Present waste:
Go, trembling song,
And stay not long; oh, stay not long:
Thou'rt only a gray and sober dove,
But thine eye is faith and thy wing is love.

THE STIRRUP CUP

From ‹Poems of Sidney Lanier.› Copyright 1884 and 1891, by Mary D. Lanier.
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Death, thou'rt a cordial old and rare:
Look how compounded, with what care!
Time got his wrinkles reaping thee
Sweet herbs from all antiquity.

David to thy distillage went,
Keats, and Gotama excellent,
Omar Khayyám, and Chaucer bright,
And Shakespeare for a king-delight.

Then, Time, let not a drop be spilt;
Hand me the cup whene'er thou wilt;
'Tis thy rich stirrup cup to me;
I'll drink it down right smilingly.

LATIN-AMERICAN LITERATURE

BY M. M. RAMSEY

The Río Bravo del Norte, better known to English-speaking readers as the Rio Grande, serves as a dividing line between what may be termed «Saxon America» and «Latin America.» The latter, and now quite familiar, designation might more aptly take the form *Celtiberian* America; since the European portion of its population belongs mainly to the same race that has occupied the Iberian peninsula from the dawn of history,—a people allied to and similar to the great Celtic race that has been for untold ages pushed by men of other mold ever towards the western sea and the setting sun.

The Carthaginians, the Romans, the Goths, and the Moors became successively masters of the Iberian soil, while the great body of the people remained substantially the same in all their inherent characteristics. The spirit of clanship, always a prominent organic feature among the Celts, and productive of numerous petty principalities, was the primal cause of the present dialectic divergences, which are so great as to render the common forms of speech of many of the provinces of Spain mutually unintelligible to their respective inhabitants.

Before the discovery of America the majority of these clans had become united into what was to be known as the Kingdom of Spain; while the people inhabiting a strip of territory along the western coast maintained a separate independence under the crown of Portugal. The modern distinction between Spanish and Portuguese, which has been perpetuated upon South-American soil, is therefore a purely political one: no marked geographical features distinguish their territorial boundaries; the Portuguese language is so close to one of the Spanish dialects that a Gallician can be understood more readily in Lisbon than in Madrid; and the mental temperament, the tastes and emotions, the modes of thought,—in short, all that is individual as distinguished from what is superficial and acquired,—will be found identical among the people of both nations.

Between these Iberian Celts, or Celtiberians, and the Teutonic race,—German, Saxon, Scandinavian,—there are marked contrasts which have an important bearing upon the subject under investigation. The Celt is vivacious, imaginative, impulsive, with strong, even violent emotions,—a being to love or fear; the Teuton counts the cost, relies more upon facts than fancies, and is not so much to be loved or feared as to be trusted. The Celt is loyal and devout, prone to reverence God, saint, or secular chief, and will bear a great weight of law or ceremonial; the Teuton is fond of individual freedom, and hates all trammels. Each is brave in his way; but while the Celt would fight for glory or mere love of fighting, the Teuton would rather not fight at all unless something were to be accomplished.

The Roman dominion in the peninsula lasted about six hundred and twenty years, and the Gothic kingdom two hundred and ninety-three; and during these nine centuries the inhabitants had become Romanized, Latinized, and Christianized,—indeed, intensely orthodox. In the Moorish invasion they were confronted by a people alien in race, language, and religion,— abhorred as infidels and polygamists; and with some intervals of relaxation, there followed seven hundred and eighty years of a war of races, in which each felt that religion was the principal point of dispute. At length the Christian succeeded in expelling the Moors and the Jews and establishing the Inquisition; and thenceforth, where his hand could reach, no form of unbelief or misbelief should be tolerated. That long «holy war» furrowed the face of early Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin-American literature with lines of thought to be found nowhere else on the globe; and the effect has not yet entirely passed away.*

Shut off from the rest of the world by the mountain wall of the Pyrenees, absorbed in religious wars and purgations and distant conquests, Spain and Portugal gave little heed to the change that was coming over the mind of Europe. That change was wide, deep, and many-sided. It has sometimes been called in English «the Baconian philosophy.» It was turning men's minds from words and notions to facts and things: the world was no longer to be understood by sitting down and thinking with closed eyes, or by reading Aristotle and Ptolemy, but by going into the light of day, observing, experimenting, and above all, measuring. The little learning that existed on the Iberian peninsula was centuries old, and was in the possession of the ecclesiastics,— a conservative class, opposed to every change. The mass of the people were profoundly ignorant, knowing only their daily labors, their favorite sports, a few prayers and formularies of the Church, and the legends of the neighborhood. Every further extension of intelligence was regarded with dread, as opening a way to the «new knowledge,» to heresy and unbelief.

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* *Vide* Hubert Howe Bancroft, Historical Works; Suárez, ‹Historia General de la República del Ecuador,› iii. 377; García Cubas, ‹Diccionario Histór. Biogr. de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos,› *sub voce* ‹León y García.›

We of Saxon America are apt to look complacently upon ourselves as considerably in advance of our neighbors to the South, at least in material prosperity. But let us consider a moment the difference of circumstances under which we have grown up. From the discovery of Haiti to the founding of Jamestown was one hundred and twenty-five years; to the landing of the Pilgrims, one hundred and thirty-eight. During those years Europe had been growing — England and Holland quite vigorously. Papal omnipotence had been rejected; and already the divine right of kings and bishops was in peril. The prelates had been obliged to hold a conference with the Puritans, instead of burning them. The priority of Spain and Portugal was therefore a disadvantage: they reached the Western Hemisphere in their intellectual infancy; England in her rough, growing youth.

The American possessions of Spain and Portugal were practically twice as remote as those of England. A royal edict took seventeen months to travel from Madrid to Lima;* and history has not recorded the speed of private packages. The English colonists kept close to the eastern edge of the continent, and to navigable waters; the most important settlements in Latin America were far inland, and could communicate with the outer world only by means of pack-mules. The maritime districts of the tropical regions were scarcely habitable by Europeans; and when the colonists moved into the interior, it was to be shaken by earthquakes and scared by the blaze of volcanoes.†

The English settlements were private enterprises, undertaken to find roomy homes for the development of liberty, manhood, and womanhood; whereas the colonization of Latin America was a national project, and all who set out for the New World were under royal patronage and control. Their prime object was to find gold and honors for a needy monarch and equally needy adventurers, and gewgaws for court ladies. John Smith, indeed, informs us that the English were not without their craze for gold; but fortunately they found little to encourage it. As the quest for gold was the chief motive with the Spaniards, they clustered around the old seats of aboriginal civilization,— the plateau of Mexico, Cundinamarca, Quito, and Lima. Subsequently communities of Europeans were established at Caracas, Santiago de Chile, the mouth of the Plata, and at various points along the Brazilian coast; but these did not attain prominence as literary centres until far into the eighteenth century. In the mean time, the intervening portions of the continent were pathless expanses of prairie and forest traversed by mighty rivers and lofty mountain ranges. This isolation was extremely unfavorable to progress.*

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*Suárez, ‹Historia General de la República del Ecuador,› iv. 412.

†In the middle of the seventeenth century there were, within fifty years, five destructive earthquakes, followed by famines.— Miguel Lobo, ‹Historia General de las Antiguas Colonias Hispano-Americanas.›

We have already referred to the causes which made the Latin-American colonist of those ages what Mr. Carlyle might have called «a religious animal»; and in the matter of acquiring and settling the new continent, the Church naturally took an active part. In addition to the bishops and the parochial clergy, whose duty was to provide for the spiritual needs of the European settlers, large numbers of the monastic orders were assigned to the conversion of the natives. By far the most important of these religious bodies was the Society of Jesus, whose members are popularly known as Jesuits. They were the latest in making their appearance; but their great business ability enabled them to outstrip all the rest. They were able, by persuasion or force, to command all the Indian labor they needed: and they established great cattle ranches and sheep farms, together with mills, workshops, warehouses, and routes of trade. Paraguay became in effect a Jesuit State, until its prosperity raised combinations hostile to the order.

Although these missionary monks undoubtedly exploited the Indian to the benefit of their own treasuries, there is yet just reason to honor their memories. Their influence was peaceful, industrial, civilizing *up to a limit*. To preserve that limit uncrossed, the Inquisition was introduced in 1569. It had not only the oversight of faith and morals, but also the control of education and of the admission of books into the country.

Such instruction as the «Holy Office» was willing to sanction was with scarcely an exception imparted by members of the monastic orders. The *frailes* in their monasteries taught gratuitously reading and the prayers of the Church; but these slender advantages were available only in the towns. Boys might also be taught writing and the four operations of arithmetic. As to the girls, they were taught by the nuns reading, prayers, and the use of the needle; a few added music and painting. It was shrewdly objected that if they should learn to write, they might correspond with their lovers and lead to no end of complications. Arístides Rojas, the Venezuelan historian, has related how the first municipal school was established in Caracas. It was twenty-four years after the founding of the city, and it required a mission to Spain and two years of lobbying to obtain the royal permission to have a school at all; and its field of usefulness was at first limited to Spanish grammar and rhetoric.*

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*A recent Chilean writer, José Bernardo Suárez, complaining of this mutual isolation, remarks: «In Chile we know more about what is going on in France than we do about occurrences in Venezuela or Ecuador. The several governments ought to take concerted action to put an end to this state of affairs, which is highly prejudicial,» etc.—‹Rasgos Biográficos de Mujeres Célebres de América,› page 51.

Books could be imported only on permits, obtainable with difficulty, after close scrutiny and long delay. An equally strict surveillance was exercised over colonial literary productions: each volume of each edition had to be registered separately, after donating twenty copies to the legal and regal authorities; and the publisher had not even the privilege of fixing the price.†

The Colonial Period

It was in such arid and sulphurous soil as has been described that Latin-American literature had to germinate. The first cultivators had to overcome difficulties unknown to those of happier countries; and it is with a feeling of wonder mixed with reverence that we realize how patiently and successfully they did overcome them.

Learning made its first appearance — where alone it could — among the monks. Several lines of research were open to them without hindrance; and others could occasionally be indulged in surreptitiously.

As their special mission was to convert the Indians, they might study Indian languages, customs, and antiquities; and it is to the diligence of these men that ethnologists owe nearly all that is known of the ancient civilizations of Mexico, Peru, and Cundinamarca. Botany and vegetable pharmacy afforded another appropriate field; and the various colonial governments fitted out at different times as many as five botanical expeditions. The students of the mathematics found exercise in geodetic surveys; and a knowledge of mechanics was essential in the working of the mines.

Clavijero furnishes a long list of those who had made translations into the native tongues. All with one or two exceptions belonged to the monastic orders; and their studies embraced fifteen languages. Humboldt himself saw dictionaries and grammars of fourteen. Quesada says that printing was introduced into Mexico in 1535, and into Lima in 1538;‡ and that the first books printed in America were for the use of the Indians. In the remainder of the century there were written or printed eighty-two books for the religious instruction of the aborigines in Mexico, and fifty for learning the native languages.§

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* Aristides Rojas, ‹Orígenes Venezolanos,› i. 308.

† See ‹Recopilación de las Indias,› Lib. i., Tit. xxiv.

‡ Ernesto Quesada, ‹Discours Prononcé au Congrès International des Américanistes, Séance du 24 Septembre, 1879, à Bruxelles,› pages 17–20.

§ Ático Selvas Zenén, ‹Episodios Históricos de América› (Paris, 1891), pages 106–117.

In time higher schools, colleges, and universities were established in the principal colonies,—the instructors being, with scarcely an exception, ecclesiastics. The little Jesuit college of Bahia began its dubious existence in 1543, and another and larger one was established at Piratininga in 1554; and the roll of alumni of these two schools contains the most prominent names of early Brazilian literature and jurisprudence. The University of the City of Mexico opened its doors to students in June 1553; and two years later saw the establishment of the University of San Marcos, at Lima. In Ecuador, not to mention several colleges founded in the sixteenth century, the University of San Gregorio was opened at Quito in 1620; and the famous university of Santo Tomás at Bogotá dates its existence from the year 1627. The University of Chuquisaca (the modern Sucre) in Bolivia, the University of Córdoba in what is now the Argentine Republic, and the College of Santa Rosa which afterwards became the University of Caracas, were all founded in the seventeenth century.

As the good fathers had abundant leisure, they committed to writing an enormous amount of details of the matters that chiefly interested them. During the three centuries of the colonial period, no part of the world furnished a greater amount of historical material. The single national library of Santiago de Chile contains a catalogued collection of 2,740 manuscripts by the Jesuits alone. The material is indeed somewhat monotonous; and a larger space is devoted to monastic and episcopal interests, and to miraculous manifestations of the Virgin and her pictures, than accords with our northern tastes. In reading these old authors, one is often reminded of the wide difference between the sixteenth or seventeenth century and some parts of the world in the nineteenth; as when Antonio de León Pinela, scholar and poet, historiographer of the Indies, authorized by royal order to lay three continents and the isles of the ocean under contribution for light and knowledge, seriously discusses the gravity of the sin of drinking chocolate on fast days.

Foremost upon the long roll of early chroniclers stands the princely name of Ixtlilxóchitl, the descendant of the ancient chiefs of Texcoco. Three of the family acquired literary reputations; but the one here meant bore the Christian appellation of Fernando de Alva. His vast knowledge of native languages, songs, traditions, and pictographs procured him employment as interpreter to the viceroy; and about the beginning of the seventeenth century that ruler employed him to write in Spanish a history of his race. No one was equally qualified. His style alone has earned for him, from Europeans, the titles of the Cicero and the Livy of Anáhuac. His industry and his opportunities were equally great. He was personally acquainted with all the Indian sages—some over a hundred years old—who had seen the empire of

Motecuhzoma at the height of its glory. His work, in thirteen books, began with the oldest traditions, and came down to his own time. The thirteenth book, dealing with the Spanish conquest, was printed separately in Mexico in 1829; but the whole is now accessible to the general reader in the French translation of Ternaux Compans.* Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (1645–1700) acquired a high reputation for writing a similar history from the materials furnished by Ixtlilxóchitl. Although far from being the only native work of importance, that of the Indian prince is the most interesting product of the aboriginal mind. The translator, in his preface, names thirteen other natives who attempted history. The most successful of these was Tezozomoc, who wrote (about 1598) a minute and circumstantial history of the Aztec nation from its original starting-place.† As he and Ixtlilxóchitl were not of the same nation, they had their partialities, and do not always agree with each other or with the Spanish chroniclers; but the art of ascertaining and telling the truth was then in its infancy,—nearly as much in the Old World as in the New.

Of the many writers belonging to the monastic orders who made valuable contributions to Indian ethnology and early colonial history, none is more widely known than Francisco Bernardino Sahagún, who went to Mexico as a young man in 1529 and died there in 1590, after spending sixty-one years in teaching the Indians. He acquired such facility in using the native tongues that he wrote his great work, 'Historia General de las Cosas de Nueva España,' in one of them.‡ It is a fine tribute to his human sympathies and his justice to a fallen race, that his contemporaries accused him of paganism. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, Francisco Xavier Clavijero (1721–93), a Jesuit and a native of Vera Cruz, spent many years as a missionary among the Indians, acquiring an extensive knowledge of their languages, customs, and traditions. Upon the suppression of the Jesuits he was compelled to leave his country, and he took refuge in Italy, where he wrote in Italian his great work 'Storia Antica del Messico' (4 vols., 1780–83).§ Although the work is not free from the inaccuracy that belongs to almost everything written in that age and from materials so uncertain, it has been the great storehouse of information regarding the ancient inhabitants of Mexico.

No American historian of his time surpassed the Brazilian Sebastião Rocha Pitta (1660–1738), a graduate of the ancient Jesuit college of Bahia. His great work 'Historia da America Portugueza desde o seu Descobrimento Até o Anno 1724' is the outcome of great labor and fidelity, involving the special study of the native languages and the examination of the archives of several European nations. It is true that the author sometimes failed, as did most of his contemporaries, in distinguishing history from legend.

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* 'Histoire des Chichémécas,' 2 vols., Paris, 1840.

† The work of Tezozomoc has also been translated into French by Ternaux Compans, Paris, 1853.

‡ His history has been incorporated in Lord Kingsborough's monumental work on Mexico.

§ An English translation in two quarto volumes was made by C. Cullen in 1787.

Not a few of the early historical productions were in verse; but these were usually commemorative of some particular event. One of the most extensive of these rhyming chronicles was that entitled 'Elegías de Varones Ilustres,' written by Juan de Castellanos, one of the original *conquistadores* of Venezuela.

Numerous epics, half history half romance, were written in Latin America about the episodes of the conquest. Of these the 'Arauco Domado' is one of the earliest and most famous. Of all the native American races, the Araucans of Chile possessed in the highest degree those qualities that make up the ideal of manhood,—bodily strength and activity, intelligence, honorable truthfulness, indomitable courage, and love of independence. The Incas had never been able to subdue them; and they resisted the Spaniards with varying results 186 years, when in 1732 their independence south of the Bío-Bío River was acknowledged by treaty. During one of the periods of Spanish success, when Santiago and Valdivia were founded, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza led a party to the conquest of Chiloe in 1558. Among his followers was a young poet, Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga, who began by the nightly camp-fires to write a narrative of the war. Being afterwards banished for supposed complicity in some attempt at revolt, he returned to Spain and lived in great poverty; but completed his poem 'La Araucana,' which has been praised as one of the truly great epics of the world. The scenery of that distant country between the Andes and the ocean, varied by earthquake shocks and volcanic fires, the trained valor of the Spaniards, the heroic courage of the natives, the hand-to-hand battles where the Indian women fought by the side of their husbands, all furnished abundant fresh material which the poet presented in colors vivid and deep. A recollection of his own treatment may have contributed to his making the Araucan the nobler combatant. It was to remedy this defect, and to render what he thought justice to the Spanish commander, that the Peruvian poet Pedro de Oña recast the epic and produced the shorter and inferior 'Arauco Domado,' in which the European is entirely victorious. It is to be regretted that from the fact of their living and writing in Spain, Ercilla y Zúñiga, together with Garcilaso de la Vega, the descendant of the Incas, cannot be reckoned among American authors.

Another famous epic dealing with episodes of the conquest is the 'Lima Fundada,' composed by the Peruvian poet Pedro de Peralta y

Barnuevo (1663–1743); a man of almost universal genius and attainments, as is attested by his numerous writings upon a wide range of subjects. A Mexican bishop, Bernardo Balbuena, who died in 1627, left a descriptive patriotic poem of great literary worth, entitled 'La Grandeza de México'; a pastoral called 'El Siglo de Oro,' the scene of which is laid in the New World; and 'El Bernardo,' an epic in three volumes, which is one of the most finished productions in the language.

Along with a considerable number of local chroniclers and tolerable versifiers, Brazil presented in the eighteenth century two epic poets of distinction, José da Santa-Rita Durão and José Basilio da Gama. The former is best known to the present age by his epic 'Caramurú.' The hero, Diogo Alvares Correa, is a personage of actual history,—a Portuguese adventurer, who with a number of others was shipwrecked on the Brazilian coast about 1509. They were able to save a good part of their effects, including arms and ammunition; and by the possession of these, Alvares became a powerful chief by the name of Caramurú (Man-of-fire), and played an important part in the history of the early Brazilian settlements. The poet has embroidered the tale with a golden thread of romance by introducing as his heroine the beautiful Indian maiden Paraguassú, the Brazilian Pocahontas. Da Gama's epic, the 'Uruguay,' although containing some fine descriptive passages, is not of equal merit. It is a polemic against the Jesuits, accusing them of trying to found an ecclesiastical empire; and fails to do justice to their civilizing influence.

No other American writer of colonial times was surrounded with such a halo of mystery and glory as Juana Inés de Azbaje y Ramírez (1651–94), more generally known as Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Her beauty, genius, and learning were alike celebrated in the most exalted terms; and she was called by her admirers "the Tenth Muse." She was the one peerless star of the viceregal court of Mexico. Suddenly, for reasons known to herself, among which may be safely surmised one of those disappointments to which young women are so greatly exposed, she forsook domestic ties and the splendors of a court for the seclusion of a convent. But she could not escape from her fame; and the highest dignitaries in Church and State sought the wisdom that dropped from her inspired lips. Her modesty was equal to her other virtues; and when twice elected abbess she declined the honor. Yet with all this sanctity and austerity, whenever the vestal veil is blown aside, the features revealed beneath are not only mortal but distinctly feminine. Her thoughts dwelt on love, jealousy, desertion, and disappointment; as is revealed in her drama 'Amor es Laberinto,' based on the legend of Theseus and Ariadne. In 'Los Empeños de una Casa,' a drama of intrigue and unrequited affection, she herself is evidently the heroine. ‹Ovillejos› is a satire on a rival beauty; and her criticism on a famous sermon has a flavor of modern free-thinking. So too her sonnets reveal not the incloistered devotee, but the living, susceptible woman.

As is well known, the «Golden Era» of the literature of the Iberian peninsula, which reached its height during the lifetime of Camoens, of Cervantes, and of Lope de Vega, was followed by a period of rapid literary and political decadence extending well into the eighteenth century. This condition could not fail to be reflected, after a time, in the colonies; and the close of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries mark the centre of a period of intellectual coma almost as profound as that existing in the mother countries. But as the eighteenth century advances, we begin to perceive there, just as in the Peninsula, the signs of a coming change. Numerous traces are to be found of an early influence, on the one hand of the Encyclopædists, and on the other of Rousseau. More important still was the revival of interest in the physical sciences, which was particularly in evidence on the plateaus of New Granada and Mexico.

The pioneer of this movement was José Celestino Mutis, a native of Cádiz; who came to America in 1760 along with Mesía de la Cerda, then recently appointed viceroy of New Granada. He was made professor of mathematics in the College of Nuestra Señora del Rosario; and it was due to his efforts that the Observatory of Bogotá was built, at that time the finest in the New World. He devoted forty years to the botany of those regions, and determined the species that yield quinine, balsam of tolu, balsam of Peru, and other valuable products. He was also the patron and instructor of a whole generation of men whose names are honorable in the history of science. Of those none was more famous, or more unfortunate, than Francisco José de Caldas. He was one of the earliest scientists in America to make and record meteorological observations; and he measured with great accuracy the altitudes of Chimborazo and Tunguragua. He accompanied Mutis in his botanical explorations, and in 1804 was made director of the observatory. In 1816, when revolution was all abroad in Spanish America, a Spanish commander, Morillo, took possession of Bogotá. He knew the republican preferences of the professors; and they knew their consequent fate. On bended knees Caldas begged for a year of close confinement prior to his execution, in order that he might finish the great botanical work that had been in progress half a century, and the plan of which he alone understood; but he plead to insensate ears, and he and all the savants who had not effected their escape were butchered.*

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* Lino de Pombo, ‹Vida de Caldas,› page 287.

Meanwhile in Mexico, the astronomical observations of Velázquez y Cárdenas, Ālzate y Ramírez, and León y Gama were attracting the attention of the French Academy and the leading astronomers of Europe; the Botanic Garden was established; and the Royal School of Mines and the Academy of Fine Arts were founded,—institutions which earned the unstinted encomiums of Humboldt.

The accession of Philip V., the grandson of Louis XIV. of France, to the throne of Spain, was distinguished by the advent of French influences, and the founding of academies and literary societies. The Spanish Royal Academy and the Lisbon Royal Academy of Sciences were established in 1714, and numerous societies, formed upon French or Italian models, sprang up in the Peninsula and the colonies, being especially noticeable in Brazil and the regions of the Plata. Another phase of the general intellectual revival was in progress in Caracas, the capital and leading commercial port of Venezuela, where foreign intercourse was spreading new and revolutionary ideas in politics.

It is in colonial Venezuela that we first meet, on American soil, with the Basques of the Pyrenees,—a people that are the living enigma of ethnology, without known kinship among the races of men. Shrewd, energetic, sturdy maintainers of liberty, they came over in great numbers in the eighteenth century, not to dig for gold, but to clear farms and introduce the culture of cocoa, cotton, coffee, and indigo. To them were largely due the material prosperity of Venezuela and its readiness to cast off the Spanish yoke. The liberator Simón Bolívar was a Basque, as were many of his principal followers.* For the past hundred years the stream of Basque emigration has been toward the region of the Plata, where they have contributed to make the Argentine Republic a second New England:† but they are scattered everywhere, and recognized by their industry, thrift, and un-Castilian names, as Icazbalceta, the Mexican archæologist; Narciso Aréstegui of Perú, author of the historical novel ‹El Padre Oraní›; the brothers Amunátegui of Chile, authors of ‹Los Precursores de la Independencia de Chile›; Anauzamendí, Arrechaveleta, Goicoerrotea, etc.

Thus we see that many important influences were tending towards a greater maturity of intelligence and independence of judgment in the Latin-American colonies, and energy was gradually accumulating for the next great advance in their national development.

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* Arístides Rojas, ‹Orígenes Venezolanos,› Tomo i., page 125; Antonio de Trueba, ‹Venezuela y los Vascos,› in ‹La Ilustración Española y Americana,› 1876.

† Revue des Deux Mondes, 1868.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

THE yoke of Spain, however legitimate, had long been felt to be heavy on the neck of her colonies; and the prostration of the Iberian peninsula beneath the heel of Napoleon furnished an opportunity for insurrections, which in 1810 broke out almost simultaneously in Mexico, Venezuela, New Granada, Quito, Chile, and Buenos Ayres. The last viceroys of Mexico and Peru departed in 1821; and the independent empire of Brazil was proclaimed October 12th, 1822. That date may be held to close the revolutionary period, considered as a struggle for national independence.*

The revolutionary period, as thus defined, covered only twelve years; and during this epoch the constant demands for action were a check to the powers of reflection. The poet abandoned his pen to grasp a flint-lock; and the diligent consumer of midnight oil now kept lonely vigil as a sentry on some rugged mountain pathway. There was neither time nor opportunity for deliberate literary composition; yet almost every day brought forth some event that served as material for writers during the years to come. Wordsworth's statement that «poetry is the outcome of emotion reflected in tranquillity» finds here a wider application; for these stirring scenes proved, in the calm of later years, to be the most prolific of themes that poet or historian could desire.

There is little permanent merit in the numerous harangues and pamphlets that were the «trumpet-call to arms» of the early American patriots; and the popular rhymes in which some colonial hero was glorified, or some Peninsular leader ridiculed, lack importance except as rough embodiments of the sentiment of the hour. It is not until the waves of the contest begin to recede that the true literature engendered by the revolution comes into evidence.

One poet of the revolution, José Joaquín Olmedo of Ecuador (1781–1847), rises far above all others for the sublimity and classic finish of his style, which earned for him the epithet of «the American Pindar»; and it is no exaggeration to say that he possessed a magnificence of rhetoric and a power of patriotic exaltation such as few poets besides the great Theban have exhibited. Miguel Luis Amunátegui, the Chilean critic, says of him:—«He applies in his writing a system of poetical tactics, as a general employs strategy. He locates his figures, his comparisons, his thoughts, according to a carefully preconceived plan: he places an apostrophe here, a maxim there; on the one hand an antithesis, on the other an exclamation; he paves the way for a profound observation by introducing a pleasant and flowery description; he is careful to place near the sombre portions, colors of a warmer tone in order to diversify impressions; he selects words that possess imitative harmony; he handles his ideas and phrases as a general does his men, his horses, and his field-pieces.» Yet the patriotic fervor of Olmedo's verse is such that the reader sees only the perfection of the finished production, without discerning the assemblage of its parts. Olmedo's masterpiece is his ‹Canto á Junín,›* an epic ode without an equal in the Spanish language. Some of the patriotic poems of Numa Pompilio Llona of Peru are especially fine; and the sonnet to Bolívar by the Peruvian Adolfo García is one of the most beautiful compositions of its kind.

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* The various so-called «revolutions» that have unhappily so often since agitated those countries have related to the power and tenure of office of the chief magistrate, or to the degree of union to be maintained between the component parts of the nation, and have nothing to do with the question of freedom from foreign domination.

The name of Andrés Bello recalls all that is ripest and best in Latin-American scholarship, statesmanship, and patriotism. The teacher of Bolívar, the personal friend and companion of Humboldt, in the inception of the revolution Bello took his place by the side of his illustrious pupil, and was by him sent on a difficult and delicate mission to England. There he labored assiduously, from 1810 to 1829, to strengthen the hands of his compatriots and procure for them the means of resistance. On the close of the revolutionary struggle he was induced by the Chileans to make his home in their country; where, as rector of the University of Santiago, he was universally recognized until his death in 1865, at the ripe age of eighty-four, as the brightest intellectual light of the southern continent. Deeply read in the ancient and modern literatures of Europe, in national and international affairs, his field of usefulness covered all that concerns mankind; and every part of Chilean life felt his invigorating influence. He prepared the great civil code that became law in 1855; and wrote treatises on international law, literary history, grammar, rhetoric, philology, pedagogics, and mental philosophy. To crown all, his poetic temperament, added to his clear and comprehensive intellect, made him one of the greatest masters of Castilian verse. His ‹Agricultura en la Zona Tórrida› is a magnificent georgic of the remote south; and not less admired is his ‹Oración por Todos,›—suggested by Victor Hugo's ‹Prière pour Tous.›

Of the revolutionary heroes who aided the cause of liberty with the tongue and pen as well as with the sword, one of the most prolific writers was Carlos María de Bustamante (1774-1848), the author of the Mexican «declaration of independence.» During the war he was four times a prisoner, and often a fugitive in peril of his life. His greatest literary work was a history of the Mexican revolution in six quarto volumes; and he was the author of several other considerable works on Mexican affairs. He edited eight successive newspapers; and wrote seventy-eight pamphlets, nearly all relating to political or other national matters.

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*Junín, the name of a village and lake (and now also of a Department) of Central Peru, made celebrated by Bolívar's victory over the Spanish in 1824.

The revolution in the region watered by the Plata was illustrated by the names and writings of Mariano Moreno, the disciple of Adam Smith; Estebán Lena y Patrón, diplomat, editor, and poet, the author of 'La Libertad de Lima'; the philosophic Juan Crisostomo Lafinur, famed for his beautiful elegy on the death of General Belgrano, the hero of Tucumán; and Vincente López y Planes, who wrote 'El Triunfo Argentino' in honor of the repulse of the English invasion of Buenos Ayres (1806–7), and also composed the national hymn of the republic.

During the period under consideration, the literary tone of Brazil presented a more placid character, due to her exemption from the violent contests that were agitating the remainder of the continent. This difference of tone is finely exemplified in the writings of Domingo Borges de Barros, Viscount of Pedra Branca (1783–1855),—more frequently spoken of simply as Pedra Branca. Born in affluence, he was educated in the mother country, where he became the boon companion of the literary coteries of Lisbon; and his sojourn of four years in France (1806–10) served to imbue him with the light Epicureanism of Paris. On his return to his native country, he showed republican leanings, and even carried them so far as to suffer a brief and genteel imprisonment. That, however, was soon over; in 1820 he was elected delegate to the Cortes at Lisbon; and on the establishment of independence he was made a senator of the Empire. Yet he never took any leading part as a legislator. He was essentially one of those who seek to enliven the brevity of life with the enjoyments of friendship, wine, gallantry, and song. The song too was characteristic: no grand epic or solemn ode, but 'Poesias offerecidas ás Senhoras Brazileiras.' His polished manners, light brilliancy, and unvarying geniality made him the favorite poet of the young empire; so that he was as truly a representative man as if he had been the Moses of a great emancipation.

THE PERIOD OF INDEPENDENCE

OF THE present sixteen independent republics of Latin America, three great countries — Chile, the Argentine Republic, and Brazil *—

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* The reader will bear in mind that Brazil, although it achieved its autonomy as an empire in 1822, did not become a republic until 1889.

discontented at seeing themselves as subordinate as ever, and that the Portuguese court retained all the powers and honors. When the King returned to Portugal in 1821, his son Dom Pedro was left as regent of the kingdom of Brazil. He became so popular that in the following year the Cortes at Lisbon ordered him to return home; but the people of Brazil begged him not to go, and proclaimed him emperor as Dom Pedro I. Thus Brazil's independence of European control was attained without bloodshed or display of armed force; and under the wise direction of a permanent ruler, she was spared the internal dissensions that long proved a formidable obstacle to the progress of some of her neighbors.

Politics and literature are much allied in Latin America. The beginnings of revolution had little to do with theories of government or abstract rights of man: they aimed at the immediate ends of free trade and relief from foreign domination. Brazil accepted an emperor with enthusiasm; independent Mexico offered the crown to a Spanish prince, and on his refusal made Iturbide emperor; and Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Paraguay, and the Argentine admitted dictators. There has always been a tendency to run into dictatorial government. There is a permanent party — including the powerful influence of the Church — in favor of a strong personal government and a large amount of interference with individual interests. At the same time there have been large numbers with the apparent ideal of «every man his own lawgiver, judge, and executioner.» The contest has been between these parties, over the question of how much government people require. The Church and the older men generally have upheld rule and authority; literary men — the young, enthusiastic, and poetic — have as generally striven for larger freedom. It is almost a stereotyped phrase in any account of a poet that he was «an ardent advocate of liberty.» It is encouraging to observe that the distance between the two wings is diminishing; that the one party is becoming less eager to govern, and the other a little more willing to be governed.

Writers on Political Science. — The necessities arising from the acquisition of national independence caused such subjects as political economy, international and constitutional law, and public education, to occupy a prominent place in the minds of the founders of the new republics. Early in the century, treatises on these topics began to appear which won the encomiums of eminent European authorities. The valuable labors of Andrés Bello have been already referred to. Juan Bautista Alberdi, the Argentine jurist (born 1808), is entitled to take rank in the class of publicists represented in Europe by Guizot, De Tocqueville, and the Mills, and by Kent and Story in the United

States. He was the author of the Argentine constitution, and of eight substantial works, of which the most important are ‘Bases y Puntos de Partida para la Organización de la República Argentina’ and ‘Sistema Económico y Rentístico de la Confederación Argentina.’ A slight, delicate man, he was when aroused a powerful writer and speaker, his power being augmented by a vein of caustic irony. As polemic articles, his pamphlets are as famous for their aggressive virility as those of Paul Louis Courier. A celebrated work of more recent date is ‘La Reforma Política’ of Dr. Rafael Núñez, recently president of the republic of Colombia; Núñez is an ultra-conservative, and his great treatise favors a «paternal despotism.» Rafael Seijas of Venezuela is a distinguished jurist who has written ably upon international law; he is also a diligent student of English, French, and Italian literatures, upon which he has given to the public some interesting articles.

After Andrés Bello, few promoters of public education have better earned the esteem of their countrymen than Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, an Argentine born in 1811. He began his career as head of a female college; and in 1842 he established the first normal school of South America, at the same time that as an editor he was combating with all his might the «separatist» dictatorship of Rosas and advocating the union of the several States. While minister to the United States (1865–67) he made a careful study of the school system; and the results of his investigations were given to the world in an essay entitled ‘Las Escuelas: Base de la Prosperidad de los Estados Unidos.’ He was favored by the personal friendship and assistance of Horace Mann, who was perhaps the best-known educationalist that the United States has ever produced. Sarmiento was president of the Argentine Republic from 1868 to 1874. As a writer he was gifted with great originality and vigor of expression, which make his ‘Recuerdos de Provincia’ one of the most entertaining books of its kind. His masterpiece is entitled ‘Facundo,’ in which he presents in a series of glowing pictures a comprehensive survey of the points of difference between civilization and barbarism.

HISTORIANS.— History has always been well represented in the literature of Latin America. Most of the States have comprehensive histories, the fruit of much research, and written with careful regard to facts and form. There are also numerous historical works of more limited scope, devoted to certain districts or periods, or gathered around the achievements of individuals.

The national or State histories often surprise the stranger by the liberal scale upon which they are constructed. A profusion of material handed down from the old days of viceregal and monastic supremacy, combined with the greater leisure of the southern life, and a certain tendency to wordiness on the part of writers, have resulted in making these histories bulky, if not at times wearisome. We could wish a broader treatment of essentials, and less space devoted to details. The authors often lived too near the events they record, or were too deeply interested in them, to be able to take an impartial, panoramic view; or are weighted by religious, political, or social prepossessions.

Father Suárez informs his readers that in collecting material for his history of Ecuador, he examined ten thousand packages of papers filed in the Archives of the Indies in Seville. León Fernández, finding no history of his native State of Costa Rica, set about collecting materials; and in 1881-86 he gave to the world 1,917 closely printed pages of documents, not previously edited, bearing upon the history of a country of less than a quarter of a million of inhabitants, and whose first printing-press was set up in 1830. The history of Mexico from the earliest times to the death of Maximilian, by Niceto de Zamacóis, fills eighteen thick octavo volumes. Lorenzo Montúfar's 'Reseña Histórica de Centro-América'—a mere outline—makes seven volumes royal octavo; and the recent 'Historia General de Chile,' by Diego Barros Arana, comprises thirteen octavo volumes. Another Chilean historian, Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, has written an account of a single campaign, 'Historia de la Campaña de Tarapacá,' in two volumes of a thousand pages each; his collective historical works fill fifteen volumes. The government of Venezuela is now publishing the historical essays of Arístides Rojas relative to that country, and they are estimated to form thirteen or fourteen volumes. The third stout volume of the 'Historia General de la República del Ecuador,' by Suárez, reaches only to the year 1718. Then there are the exhaustive works relating to Peru, of which we may mention the magnificent treatise of Raimondi, cut short in its fourth volume by the author's death in 1892. The tenth volume of the 'Historia de la República Argentina' by Vicente Fidel López has just appeared, and its venerable author is continuing the work with an industry unchecked by the weight of his seventy-six years.

Among special historical works which even the briefest enumeration would include, the most widely known are probably the twin histories of General Bartolomé Mitre of Buenos Ayres (born 1821), bearing the titles 'Historia de Belgrano y de la Independencia Argentina,' and 'Historia de San Martín y de la Emancipación Sud-Americana.' Special mention should be given to the standard work of Rafael María Baralt of Maracaibo (1810-60), entitled 'Resumen de la Historia Antigua y Moderna de Venezuela,' which Arístides Rojas has more recently supplemented by seven "studies" on various epochs and aspects of the national history. Two histories written by Colombians rank very high; namely, the ‹Historia de la Nueva Granada› by José Antonio de Plaza, and the ‹Historia de la Revolución de Colombia› by José Manuel Restrepo. The historical works of Mariano Paz Soldán are characterized by that patient accumulation of facts which is supposed to distinguish German scholarship; his reputation rests more especially upon his ‹Historia del Perú Independiente de 1819 á 1827,› and his ‹Diccionario Geográfico-Estadístico del Perú.›

Manuel Orozco y Berra gave to the public in 1880 an elaborate account of the ancient nations of Mexico in his ‹Historia Antigua y de la Conquista de México,› in which he goes over the whole subject treated by Prescott, and adds a profusion of further details. Vicente Fidel López, the author of the large ‹History of the Argentine Republic› previously mentioned, has written two historical works of great interest to the ethnologist and antiquarian; they are entitled ‹Las Razas del Perú Anteriores á la Conquista› and ‹Les Races Aryennes au Pérou.›

Brazil has produced several historical writers of merit. The standard history is by Fr. Antonio de Varnhagen, and is entitled ‹Historia Geral do Brazil.› It extends to the last half of the present century, but does not reach the abdication of Pedro II. Varnhagen's style is lucid and dignified, as required by the subject, and free from the rhetorical inflation too common among inferior writers in the southern continent. His descriptive passages are often particularly fine. He published in 1860 an interesting little book, ‹A Caça no Brazil,›—the first of the kind that has appeared in South America,—describing the wild animals and the modes of pursuing them in the great forests and on the plains of that country. Pereira da Silva's ‹Historia da Fundação do Imperio Brazileiro› is one of the standard works of Brazilian history.

LITERARY CRITICS.—Opinions on authors and books occupy a larger relative space in Latin-American literature than in that of Anglo-Saxon nations. Criticism, among our southern neighbors, deals less with the views and statements of an author than with his manner of presenting them; so by treating literature as a fine art, along with painting and music, it becomes in itself a fine art, requiring artistic faculties carefully cultivated. One of the highest authorities in the southern continent has said: «That which above all other things exalts an author and enables him to reach posterity, is style.» The more staid people of the north hold that substance is even more important than form, and that the enduring masterpieces of the world's literature combine both. It is a question of relative estimate.

Criticism, as a fine art, has been cultivated in Latin America with surprising assiduity; and includes among its eminent masters such men as Torres Caicedo, Miguel Luis Amunátegui, and Calixto Oyuela, the author of ‹Estudios y Artículos Literarios.› A few words must be spared for Rafael M. Merchán, the Cuban exile, of whom it has been elegantly said that he « writes with a gloved hand and a pen of gold.» He made his home in Bogotá, one of the foremost literary centres of the southern continent, and became secretary to the President. His poetic temperament, wide reading, and fine discernment furnish the qualifications that make him above all a critic, and which shine conspicuously in his study on Juan Clemente Zenea and in his ‹Estudios Críticos.›

Of all this wealth of critical discussion, no part affords more attractive reading than the works of Martín García Mérou, the present Argentine minister to the United States. They show a wide familiarity with the literatures of Europe and America, a delicate judgment, and that kind of fairness that can appreciate the merits of one with whom he does not agree. In addition, his personal acquaintance with the leading contemporary authors of South America imparts to his writings a peculiar interest that is lacking in the works of less favored critics. His essay on the poet Echeverría may be cited as one of his most thorough studies; while in his two recent reminiscences, ‹Recuerdos Literarios› and ‹Confidencias Literarias,› he flits from one author or book to another with all the vivacity and brilliancy of a tropical humming-bird.

Those most interested in the subject of Latin-American literature are now eagerly awaiting the great work in preparation by Professor García Velloso, of Buenos Ayres. It is to be a comprehensive history of the literature of the entire southern continent.

Novelists.—The novel, as a means of interesting and influencing the public mind, did not begin to assume prominence in Latin America until the latter half of the present century; and the class of writers whose specialty is prose fiction is still relatively small. Jorge Isaaks, the Colombian poet, is widely known by his ‹María,› a simple and pathetic story of rural life, a translation of which has been extensively read in the United States. His compatriot Julio Arboleda has given the public a bright contrast to this sombre picture, in his sparkling romance ‹Casimiro el Montañés.›

The collection of stories known as ‹La Linterna Mágica,› written by José T. del Cuellar, of Mexico, has been deservedly popular. Ignacio M. Altamirano, a Mexican lawyer and orator of pure Indian blood, has left a novel, ‹Clemencia,› which for style and pathos has seldom been surpassed. The Mexican historian Orozco y Berra wrote a beautiful novel, ‘Escenas de Treinta Años,’ relating the experiences of an unfortunate disappointed invalid. Dr. J. J. Fernández Lizardi, generally known by the pseudonym of «El Pensador Mexicano,» has revived the old Spanish picaresque type of romance in his ‘Periquillo Sarmiento.’

The Argentine historian Vicente Fidel Lopez is the author of a thrilling historical novel entitled ‘La Novia del Hereje,’ the scene of which is laid in Lima in the time of the Inquisition; but the favorite romance of the region of the Plata is the ‘Amalia’ of José Mármol, one of the most beautiful of modern novels. Chile has produced several noted works of fiction, among which the ‘Alberto el Jugador’ of the poetess Rosario Orrego de Uribe, ‘La Dote de una Joven,’ by Vicente Grez, and the historical novel ‘Los Héroes del Pacífico,’ by Ramón Pacheco, are much admired. ‘Contra la Marea,’ by the Chilean Alberto del Solar, is one of the most powerful of recent American novels.

Quite a number of romances have been founded upon Indian legends, or tell of Indian life and customs, after the manner of Fenimore Cooper. Two of the best of these are quite recent,—the ‘Painé’ and ‘Relmú’ of the Argentine publicist Estanislao S. Zeballos, who, still young, combines every form of literary activity. The ‘Huincahual,’ by Alberto del Solar, is one of the most able productions of this class, and gives evidence of a diligent study of Araucan customs and character. The Brazilian novelist José Martinião Alencar wrote two famous Indian romances, entitled ‘Iracema’ and ‘Guarany.’ ‘Iracema’ develops the main feature of the story of John Smith and Pocahontas. The other novel, like Helen Hunt Jackson's ‘Ramona,’ tells how a young Indian loves a Portuguese woman. Carlos Gomes has transformed it into an opera which has become well known in Europe, retaining the name of ‘Guarany.’

Besides Martinião Alencar, Brazil has produced during the present century two highly successful writers of prose fiction,—Joaquim Manoel de Macedo and Bernardo Guimarães. Macedo was a doctor of medicine, a professor in the University of Rio, a member of Congress, and a prolific writer in prose and verse. His ‘Moreninha’ (Brunette), published in 1840, undertook for the first time to portray Brazilian society as it really was; it enjoyed extraordinary popularity, as did also his ‘Senhora,’ which some critics consider superior to ‘Moreninha.’ Guimarães is one of the most powerful and original writers of Brazil. ‘Ermitão de Muquem’ is considered his best novel. It is written in three versions or styles: one plain prose, one poetic prose, and one peculiar to the author, like the styles of Bentham and Carlyle. His ‘Seminarista’ is a romance with a tragic outcome, and is directed against the enforced celibacy of the clergy.

Poets and Dramatists.— The Spanish and Portuguese languages lend themselves so readily to versification that the amount of poetry produced is enormous; indeed, it may almost be assumed that every South-American writer not a scientific specialist is also a poet. Juan León Mera published in 1868 a critical history of the poets of Ecuador, at a time when many persons were not aware that that country had ever possessed any. Cortés, in his 'Parnaso Peruano,' fills eight hundred pages with choice extracts from forty-four of the leading poets of Peru; and the great anthology of Menéndez y Pelayo, consisting of four thick volumes of poetical selections, purports to give "only the very best that Spanish-American writers have produced in verse."

Four names may represent the different styles of poetry cultivated in Mexico. Manuel Carpio, a physician by profession, was well read in Greek and Roman literatures, and a still more diligent student of Jewish lore. His 'Tierra Santa' is a work of great learning, not inferior to Robinson's 'Biblical Researches.' He is best known, however, by his poems; one of which, 'La Cena de Baltasar,' shows remarkable descriptive power. Fernando Calderón is distinguished rather by the sweetness than the strength of his verse. The tenderness of his sentiments is well displayed in 'Hermán, ó la Vuelta del Cruzado.' He was the author of a comedy entitled 'Á Ninguna de las Tres,' intended as a satire on those who return from foreign travel only to find fault with everything at home. José Joaquín Pesado has at once tenderness, sublimity, and classic finish. In 'La Revelación' he has essayed to wake anew the harp which Dante swept; and he has given to his countrymen in their own tongue the odes of Horace and the psalms of David, along with some minor poems of rare beauty. Last of all, in 'Los Aztecas' he has sought to restore and interpret the hymns, chants, and lost lore of the primitive races of Anáhuac. Manuel Acuña, whose unhappy life extended only from 1849 to 1873, holds the place among Mexican poets that Edgar A. Poe does among those of the United States. In his nervous, delicate nature, poetry was a morbid secretion, like the pearl in the oyster; and he became the self-appointed priest and prophet of sorrow and disappointment. His most noted poems are 'El Pasado,' 'Á Rosario,' and a drama entitled 'Gloria.'

One of the most enduring masterpieces of Spanish-American verse is 'Gonzalo de Oyón,' a beautifully wrought tale based upon an episode in the early history of the country. Its author, Julio Arboleda (1817–62), held the foremost rank among the Colombian writers of the first half of this century. Another Colombian writer who reflects the sentiments of the past is Silveria Espinosa de Rendón, who laments the expulsion of the Jesuits in her 'Lágrimas i Recuerdos.'

Among the young and hopeful spirits that enliven the brilliant society of Bogotá at the present time, Antonio José Restrepo is the poet laureate. The most celebrated of his longer poems are 'Un Canto' and 'El Dios Pan'; in which the author shows himself to be a liberalist of the most pronounced type, who writes in utter fearlessness of all absolute rulers for man's mind, body, or estate.

The extensive writings of Estebán Echeverría (1809–51) contain many passages that are weak and commonplace; but he stands forth as the national poet of the Argentine Republic, reflecting the life and thought found on its vast plains and along its mighty rivers. The productions to which his fame is chiefly due are 'Avellaneda,' 'La Revolución del Sur,' and 'La Cautiva.' The last-named poem, an Indian story of the Pampas, deserves a place by the side of 'Hiawatha,' which it resembles in the unaffected beauty of its descriptive passages and the flowing simplicity of its versification. Martín Coronado and Rafael Obligado, two of the leading poets of Buenos Ayres, are disciples of Echeverría, though of different types. Coronado's verse is impassioned and dazzling; while Obligado's muse loves the contentment of the family hearth or the shady banks of the majestic Paraná, where the stillness is broken only by the cry of a wild bird or the lazy dip of an oar.

The poems of Arnaldo Márquez and Clemente Althaus of Peru take a very high rank for their beauty and tenderness of sentiment as well as purity of style. The 'Noche de Dolor en las Montañas' and the 'Canto de la Vida' of the Peruvian Numa Pompilio Llona are compositions which will be admired for centuries. The 'Romances Americanos' of the Chilean poet Carlos Walker Martínez, and the 'Flores del Aire' of Dr. Adán Quiroga of Argentina, are collections of poems of great merit and originality. Compositions of remarkable beauty will be found in the 'Brisas del Mar' of the Peruvian Manuel Nicolás Corpancho, the 'Armonías' of Guillermo Blest Gana of Chile, and the 'Flores Silvestres' of Francisco Javier de Acha of Uruguay.

José Batrés y Montúfar of Guatemala, a lyric poet of merit, is one of the most noted satirists of America. Matías Córdoba and García Goyena of Guatemala have been justly compared, as fabulists, to Æsop and La Fontaine.

Among Brazilian writers of the present century, two representative poets may be selected: Antonio Gonçalves Dias and Domingos José Gonçalves Magalhães. Dias was even more esteemed as a patriot than as a poet; and was much employed by the late emperor in carrying out educational and other reforms, in which that estimable sovereign was deeply interested. The successive issues of miscellaneous poems by Dias are now known collectively as his 'Canteiros,' and won the enthusiastic commendation of the Portuguese critic Herculão. He also left some Indian epics, and the two dramas 'Leonor de Mendonça' and 'Sextilhas de Frei Antão.' He was so far honored in his own country that his fellow-townsmen erected a statue to his memory, with an inscription declaring him the foremost poet of Brazil. The best productions of Magalhães are a tragedy entitled 'Antonio José ou o Poeta e a Inquisição,' and 'A Confederação dos Tamayos,' the latter an epic founded on an outbreak of the Tamayo and other Indians.

SUMMARY

On looking across the Rio Grande at authors and books beyond, one is struck by some points that contrast with our northern life. There, public men are writers. Whether it be that political life stimulates literary activity, or that the latter is a passport to the former, presidents, senators, cabinet officers, judges, and ministers plenipotentiary all write. Many of them read, write, and speak a number of languages,—an accomplishment so rare in Saxon America that an envoy is sometimes sent on an important mission without being able to speak the language of the country to which he is accredited.

Again, the literary men of the far South, with scarce an exception, write poetry as readily as prose. Nothing could be more incongruous than the idea of the average public man in the United States writing poetry. Something is due to the character of the language, that a stranger does not readily appreciate. In Spanish and Portuguese verse the words roll and swell, liquid and lengthy, like the waves of the sea, and tempt one to prolong the billowy movement. An excellent critic has said on this point, «The seeming ease of the versification is constantly enticing the poet on.»* The result is that we get not only good measure in the length of words, but liberal count in their number. Furthermore, we of the north are actively looking around, watching the chances; the man of the south is reflective, introspective, and he commits his soliloquies to paper. He is often more intent on photographing his own mind than on reaching the minds of others. Latin-American verse is glowingly descriptive, or plaintive and tender, with an occasional tinge of melancholy; but it all possesses a healthy and natural tone, and has not yet been infected by the morbid unrest and hopeless cynicism that characterizes much of the recent poetry of older nations.

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*Martín García Mérou, 'Ensayo sobre Echeverría,' page 174.

In most Latin-American countries the persons of unmixed European descent are still in a minority. This alone would lead to a marked distinction of classes. Actually the difference between the highest and the lowest is still extreme. On the one hand there are learning and careful education — somewhat different from ours in kind, but by no means inferior in degree; on the other, the densest ignorance and superstition. The great bulk of the people from Texas to Cape Horn cannot read and write. Great efforts are put forth to remedy this state of things by general education, and much has already been accomplished; but the task is immense and will occupy several generations. In the United States, books are intended for a reading class numbering many millions, and are made as cheap as possible, so as to come within their reach. This is still more conspicuously the case in Germany. In Latin America there are no millions to read, and the best books are addressed to a relatively small class. As sales are limited, large works of general interest or permanent value are published or aided by the governments, or by wealthy and public-spirited individuals. Lesser works are often put forth in small editions at the cost of the author. No pains or expense is spared to make some of these masterpieces of their kind; and combinations of paper, typography, and binding are produced whose elegance is nowhere surpassed.

Of the lighter literature of the southern republics, a large part first appears in the various *revistas* and other literary periodicals maintained in all the principal cities. It consists principally of odes, sonnets, short stories, and essays. These essays embrace every variety of subject: the authors traverse — often literally — the Old World and the New, view them geographically, ethnologically, sociologically, and write under such captions as ‘A Winter in Russia,’ ‘The Bedouins of the City,’ ‘The Literature of Slang,’ or ‘The History of an Umbrella.’ The subjects are generally treated in a light, sketchy style, so as to be pleasant reading, and afford at least as much entertainment as information.

Novelists and dramatists are under a great disadvantage, having no protective tariff to save them from European, and especially French, competition. Editors and managers find translations cheaper and easier to obtain than native productions. There is happily a growing reaction in favor of native writers who represent American subjects as seen by American eyes. When the cultivated public becomes fully aware of the greater genuineness of these domestic productions, native talent will have an ampler field; and there is every reason to believe that it will be prepared to satisfy the fullest demand.

AUTHORITIES. — J. M. Pereira da Silva, ‘Os Varões Illustres do Brazil durante os Tempos Coloniaes,’ Paris, 1858. Ferdinand Wolff,

‘Histoire de la Littérature Brésilienne,’ Berlin, 1863. ‘Lira Americana,’ by R. Palma, Paris, 1865. Domingo Cortés, ‘América Poética,’ Paris, 1875; and ‘Diccionario Biográfico Americano,’ Paris, 1875. Juan León Mera, ‘Ojeada histórico-crítica sobre la Poesía Ecuatoriana,’ Quito, 1868. Francisco Largomaggiore, ‘América Literaria,’ Buenos Ayres, 1883. Francisco Pimentel, ‘Historia Crítica de la Literatura y de las Ciencias en México.’ J. M. Torres Caicedo, ‘Ensayos Biográficos i de Crítica Literaria sobre los Principales Publicistas i Literatos de la América Latina.’ Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, ‘Antología de Poetas Hispano-Americanos,’ 4 vols., Madrid, 1893–95.

M. M. Ramsey

WILLIAM EDWARD HARTPOLE LECKY

(1838–)

BY JOHN WHITE CHADWICK

Lecky, whose rank among English historians is so well assured by what he has done already as to be quite independent of anything he may do hereafter, was born in the neighborhood of Dublin, Ireland, March 26th, 1838. Trinity College, Dublin, which gave him his first degree in 1859, has since united with Oxford and other universities in crowning him with the highest honors. His inclination to historical literature was pronounced while he was still in college; and found its first public expression in 1861, when he published anonymously 'The Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland,' four elaborate studies of Swift, Flood, Grattan, and O'Connell. The secret of his authorship was not well kept; and the book attracted so much attention, read in the light of current Irish politics, that it was republished in 1871 under Mr. Lecky's name, with an important introduction from his hand. This maiden book had much of the promise of his later writing in its face. Without reading into it what is not there, it is easy to divine that the writer's predilection was for history rather than for biography, for causes and relations rather than for mere events, and for history as literature, not as a catalogue or grouping of things exactly verified. Moreover, in this early book we have that warm humanity which has been the dominant note of Mr. Lecky's literary work, and which has proved quite as attractive as his streaming and pellucid style.

W. E. H. Lecky

The years from 1861 to 1865 must have been exceedingly laborious, including as they did the preparation for the 'History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe,' two large volumes full of such matter as must have required a vast amount of careful study and research for its separation from the innumerable documents in which it was imbedded. Without a sign of Buckle's wanton display of his authorities, both text and notes revealed a marvelous patience and persistency in the search for even the smallest farthing candle that might shed a ray of light upon his theme. The only deduction from this aspect of the work was the comparatively limited extent of the demand made on German sources, which were no doubt incomparably rich. No historical work since Buckle's 'History of Civilization in Europe' (1857) had attracted so much attention, nor has any from its publication in 1865 until now. It was like Buckle's book in the clarity though not in the quality of its style; and also like it in a more important sense, in that it was a history after the manner of Montesquieu's 'Spirit of Laws' and Voltaire's 'Essay on Manners.' It was a philosophic history, not an annalist's. It was moreover the work of a historical essayist rather than a historian. The subjects treated made this a necessity; but either the writing of this book made the historical essay the habit of Mr. Lecky's mind, or his instinctive tendency to it was not to be escaped. We have first an essay on 'Magic and Witchcraft,' next one on 'Church Miracles,' then a more extended one on 'Æsthetic, Scientific, and Moral Developments of Rationalism,' a still more extended one on 'Persecution,' one on the 'Secularization of Politics,' and one on the 'Industrial History of Rationalism.' All of these subjects are treated with a fascinating directness and simplicity, which is the more remarkable because the essays take up into themselves such a multitude of facts and observations. The text is not impoverished to enrich the notes, but a sure instinct seems to decide what can be assimilated and what had better be left in the rough.

The object of the work, as declared in the introduction, was to trace the history of the Spirit of Rationalism, not as a class of definite doctrines,

> «but rather as a certain cast of thought, or bias of reasoning, which has during the last three centuries gained a marked ascendency in Europe»; which «leads men on all occasions to subordinate dogmatic theology to the dictates of reason and conscience, and as a necessary consequence, greatly to restrict its influence upon life. It predisposes men, in history, to attribute all kinds of phenomena to natural rather than miraculous causes; in theology, to esteem succeeding systems the expressions of the wants and aspirations of that religious sentiment which is planted in all men; and in ethics, to regard as duties only those which conscience reveals to be such.»

Mr. Lecky traced this history with a fairness that went far to disarm the prejudices of those least disposed to go along with him. He exhibited a remarkable power of entering sympathetically into states of mind entirely foreign to his own, and of disengaging in particular characters — that of Voltaire, for example — the better elements from the worse. But he could not be content to trace a process, however congenial to his sympathies. He had a doctrine to maintain, as definite as Buckle's doctrines of the determinism of natural conditions and the unprogressive character of morality. It was, that the progress of rationalism was « mainly silent, unargumentative, and insensible »; that it « appeared first of all in those least subject to theological influences, soon spread through the educated laity, and last of all took possession of the clergy.» Indeed, the rationalistic spirit seemed to have for him the realistic character which ideas had for the schoolmen before the Nominalists won their victory. If his doctrine had been as true as he imagined it, much of his book would have been superfluous. His great thinkers would have been merely marking time, not leading the advance. The truth which it contained was, that the effect of argument is not immediate; that it falls into the ground and dies, and afterward bears fruit. Fortunately the value of his work was quite as independent of his pet theory as was that of Buckle's of his. It contains many tributes to the influence of one thinker or another which are widely at variance with the doctrine of their practical inefficiency; the tribute to Voltaire for « having done more to destroy the greatest of human curses [persecution] than any other of the sons of men » being one of the most eloquent.

Mr. Lecky's 'History of European Rationalism' is the work which has done more than any other for his immediate reputation and to perpetuate his fame; but hardly less significant was his 'History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne,' which appeared in 1869. Had not his previous studies put him on the track of many things which here are hunted down, four years would have been all too short for the making of a book which covers so much ground. Surely something of Mr. Lecky's praise of Gibbon's diligence may be credited to his own account, when what he did in four years is compared with what Gibbon did in twenty-four; especially when we remember that what he has remarked as true of Gibbon must have been true of his own methods of investigation. « Some of his most valuable materials will be found in literatures that have no artistic merit; in writers who without theory, and almost without criticism, simply relate the facts which they have seen, and express in unsophisticated language the beliefs and impressions of their time.» Such literatures and writers must have been the main region of Mr. Lecky's studies for his 'European Morals.' In this book, as in the 'Rationalism,' he had a thesis to maintain. Here it was the intuitive character of morality; and it was maintained at great length, its discussion consuming more than one-third of his first volume. It was an essay which was not intimately related to the matters following; and while many of its criticisms of utilitarian ethics were well conceived as against its earlier and grosser forms, they lose their point when turned against such writers as Sidgwick and Stephen and others of the present generation. In this preliminary discussion the formal character of the whole work was foreshadowed. Again we have a series of historical essays and not a continuous history. But these essays are remarkable for their scope, and for their intelligent appreciation of different systems of morality, pagan and Christian. One of them, on the Pagan Empire, had for an essay within an essay a thoroughly sympathetic study of Stoicism. The bias of Mr. Lecky's intuitive morality was shown in his less adequate appreciation of what was best in the Epicureans. Subsequent studies have done something to modify the conclusions which he draws concerning the corruption of the Empire.

Another essay in this book is on the 'Conversion of Rome.' This was the essay which did more than any other to make the book a subject of wide popular interest, and much scholarly and theological debate. It coincided with the famous chapters of Gibbon on the same subject; and while finding operative and important all the causes which Gibbon named, found them inadequate to account for the conversion of the Empire as it was actually accomplished. At the same time Mr. Lecky finds this great event, or series of events, «easily explicable» by purely natural causes. «The apparent anomalies of history are not inconsiderable, but they must be sought in other quarters. . . . Never before was a religious transformation so manifestly inevitable. No other religion ever combined so many forms of attraction as Christianity, both from its intrinsic excellence and from its manifest adaptation to the special wants of the time.»

The stress of the second volume, excepting a concluding chapter on the 'Position of Women,' was upon the growth of asceticism and the monastic orders. With a full appreciation of the distinctive excellences of the ascetic period, and the contributions that it made to European civilization, Mr. Lecky has been thought by certain critics to fail in comprehension of the «saints of the desert»; and it must be admitted that where a saint had not washed himself for thirty years, he found it difficult to identify his body as the temple of God or to see the light of heaven shining in his face: but in general he is remarkable for his sympathetic realization of the most various manifestations of the religious spirit. He sees with equal clearness what was most beautiful and noble in the pagan ethics, and what was more tender and compassionate in the ethics of Christianity in its earlier course. In the chapter on the 'Position of Women,' a tentative argument for the public control of sexual vice excited much contemporary discussion. The argument was strangely utilitarian for an intuitive moralist, and many averred that it was not soundly utilitarian. For once at least Mr. Lecky waxed sentimental when he said of the prostitute, «Herself the supreme type of vice, she is ultimately the most efficient guardian of virtue. . . . She remains, while creeds and civilizations rise and fall, the eternal priestess of humanity, blasted for the sins of the people.»

Nine years elapsed after the publication of 'European Morals' before Mr. Lecky again challenged the attention of the reading world. In 1878 he published the first two volumes of his 'History of England in the Eighteenth Century.' Six more volumes, completing the work, appeared in the course of the next ten years. It was now more evident than ever before that Mr. Lecky's habit as a historical essayist rather than a historian was inherent in the constitution of his mind, and not in the particular subjects to which he might happen to apply himself. His object was, as he states it, «to disengage from the great mass of facts those which relate to the permanent forces of the nation, or which indicate some of the more enduring features of national life.» To this object in the earlier volumes he was earnestly devoted; with distinct and admirable success discussing in separate chapters, which were virtually separate essays, such questions as the nature and power of the monarchy, the aristocracy, the growth of democracy, the history of political ideas, the increasing power of Parliament and the press, amusements, manners, and beliefs. One of the best of these monographs was on religious liberty; another on the causes of the French Revolution, which he declared was not inevitable; another on the rise of Methodism, so sympathetic as to be more flattering than such a Methodist history as that of Tyerman. In the early volumes certain chapters were devoted to Ireland; but midway of the sixth he returned to this subject and did not again leave it. In all we have about three volumes devoted to Ireland, which were afterwards printed separately in five smaller volumes as a history of Ireland. In these volumes Mr. Lecky appears more distinctly as a historian than anywhere else. The period covered, barring a brief introduction, is only five years long: from 1795 to 1800, the period of the Rebellion and the Union. Even here he cares much less for dramatic personalities and the regular succession of events than for the analysis of the policies and motives that were at work in that unhappy time. Here his work stands in as vivid contrast with that of Froude, treating the same subjects, as his severe impartiality with Froude's blind and brutal partisanship. But Froude is nothing if not picturesque, while Lecky hardly sees the circumstances, so bent is he on the ideas they involve. His fairness is the more remarkable because before his history was finished he had left the Liberals and joined the Unionists, at the time of the schism in 1886. Yet only a few passages bear any trace of party spirit. The failure of England to govern Ireland wisely and successfully is not in the least disguised; and it is compared with her success in governing India, with a population of 200,000,000 over against Ireland's 5,000,000. The key of the enigma is found in the fact that "Irish affairs have been in the very vortex of English party politics, while India has hitherto lain outside their sphere."

In 1891 Lecky published a volume of poems which added nothing to his reputation; and in 1896 a two-volume work, 'Democracy and Liberty.' A seat in Parliament had proved for him "the seat of the scorner" so far as democracy is concerned. The work provokes comparison with Sir Henry Sumner Maine's 'Popular Government.' Like that, it is more of a political pamphlet than a dispassionate study of the great subjects with which it is concerned; and it is related to Lecky's 'History of Rationalism' and 'European Morals' very much as Maine's 'Popular Government' is related to his 'Ancient Law.' It contains much wholesome and important criticism on democratic institutions and tendencies; but it has a much keener eye for their defects than for their advantages, and it measures them rather by the standard of an ideal Utopia than by that of any political success which has been as yet accomplished. But it would be unjust to compare a book which is so manifestly the outcome of the author's immediate political irritation, with the more serious performances of his unbiased scholarship, when he was "beholding the bright countenance of Truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies."

Waiving for the present the claims of this passionate arraignment of democracy, we find in Mr. Lecky a historical writer whose works are among the most interesting and significant literary products of his time. His place is neither with the annalists nor with the political historians, but with those for whom the philosophy of history has had a perennial fascination. And while it is pre-eminently with such literary historians as Macaulay and Froude and Green,—in so far as he has written to the end of being read, in a style which has merits of its own comparing favorably with theirs,—he is widely separated from these respectively: with less continuity than Macaulay, far less dramatic energy than Froude, and nothing of Green's architectonic faculty. But few historians have excelled his diligence or carefulness, or chosen greater themes, or handled them with a more evident desire to bring the truth of history to bear upon our personal and social life.

John White Chadwick.

The following extracts are taken from ‹History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne,› with the approval of D. Appleton & Co., publishers.

THE MORAL INFLUENCE OF GLADIATORIAL SHOWS ON THE ROMAN PEOPLE

The gladiatorial games form, indeed, the one feature of Roman society which to a modern mind is almost inconceivable in its atrocity. That not only men, but women, in an advanced period of civilization,—men and women who not only professed but very frequently acted upon a high code of morals,—should have made the carnage of men their habitual amusement, that all this should have continued for centuries with scarcely a protest, is one of the most startling facts in moral history. It is however perfectly normal, and in no degree inconsistent with the doctrine of natural moral perceptions; while it opens out fields of ethical inquiry of a very deep though painful interest.

These games, which long eclipsed, both in interest and in influence, every other form of public amusement at Rome, were originally religious ceremonies celebrated at the tombs of the great, and intended as human sacrifices to appease the manes of the dead. They were afterwards defended as a means of sustaining the military spirit by the constant spectacle of courageous death; and with this object it was customary to give a gladiatorial show to soldiers before their departure to a war. In addition to these functions they had a considerable political importance; for at a time when all the regular organs of liberty were paralyzed or abolished, the ruler was accustomed in the arena to meet tens of thousands of his subjects, who availed themselves of the opportunity to present their petitions, to declare their grievances, and to censure freely the sovereign or his ministers. The games are said to have been of Etruscan origin; they were first introduced into Rome B. C. 264, when the two sons of a man named Brutus compelled three pair of gladiators to fight at the funeral of their father; and before the close of the Republic they were common on great public occasions, and, what appears even more horrible, at the banquets of the nobles. The rivalry of Cæsar and Pompey greatly multiplied them, for each sought by this means to ingratiate himself with the people. Pompey introduced a new form of combat between men and animals. Cæsar abolished the old custom of restricting the mortuary games to the funerals of men;

and his daughter was the first Roman lady whose tomb was desecrated by human blood. Besides this innovation, Cæsar replaced the temporary edifices in which the games had hitherto been held by a permanent wooden amphitheatre, shaded the spectators by an awning of precious silk, compelled the condemned persons on one occasion to fight with silver lances, and drew so many gladiators into the city that the Senate was obliged to issue an enactment restricting their number. In the earliest years of the Empire, Statilius Taurus erected the first amphitheatre of stone. Augustus ordered that not more than one hundred and twenty men should fight on a single occasion, and that no prætor should give more than two spectacles in a single year; and Tiberius again fixed the maximum of combatants: but notwithstanding these attempts to limit them, the games soon acquired the most gigantic proportions. They were celebrated habitually by great men in honor of their dead relatives, by officials on coming into office, by conquerors to secure popularity, and on every occasion of public rejoicing, and by rich tradesmen who were desirous of acquiring a social position. They were also among the attractions of the public baths. Schools of gladiators — often the private property of rich citizens — existed in every leading city of Italy; and besides slaves and criminals, they were thronged with freemen who voluntarily hired themselves for a term of years. In the eyes of multitudes, the large sums that were paid to the victor, the patronage of nobles and often of emperors, and still more the delirium of popular enthusiasm that centred upon the successful gladiator, outweighed all the dangers of the profession. A complete recklessness of life was soon engendered both in the spectators and the combatants. The 'lanistæ,' or purveyors of gladiators, became an important profession. Wandering bands of gladiators traversed Italy, hiring themselves for the provincial amphitheatres. The influence of the games gradually pervaded the whole texture of Roman life. They became the commonplace of conversation. The children imitated them in their play. The philosophers drew from them their metaphors and illustrations. The artists portrayed them in every variety of ornament. The Vestal Virgins had a seat of honor in the arena. The Colosseum, which is said to have been capable of containing more than eighty thousand spectators, eclipsed every other monument of Imperial splendor, and is even now at once the most imposing and the most characteristic relic of pagan Rome.

In the provinces the same passion was displayed. From Gaul to Syria, wherever the Roman influence extended, the spectacles of blood were introduced; and the gigantic remains of amphitheatres in many lands still attest by their ruined grandeur the scale on which they were pursued. In the reign of Tiberius, more than twenty thousand persons are said to have perished by the fall of the amphitheatre at the suburban town of Fidenæ. Under Nero, the Syracusans obtained as a special favor an exemption from the law which limited the number of gladiators. Of the vast train of prisoners brought by Titus from Judea, a large proportion were destined by the conqueror for the provincial games. In Syria, where they were introduced by Antiochus Epiphanes, they at first produced rather terror than pleasure; but the effeminate Syrians soon learned to contemplate them with a passionate enjoyment, and on a single occasion Agrippa caused fourteen hundred men to fight in the amphitheatre at Berytus. Greece alone was in some degree an exception. When an attempt was made to introduce the spectacle into Athens, the cynic philosopher Demonax appealed successfully to the better feelings of the people by exclaiming:—'You must first overthrow the altar of Pity.' The games are said to have afterwards penetrated to Athens, and to have been suppressed by Apollonius of Tyana; but with the exception of Corinth, where a very large foreign population existed, Greece never appears to have shared the general enthusiasm.

One of the first consequences of this taste was to render the people absolutely unfit for those tranquil and refined amusements which usually accompany civilization. To men who were accustomed to witness the fierce vicissitudes of deadly combat, any spectacle that did not elicit the strongest excitement was insipid. The only amusements that at all rivaled the spectacles of the amphitheatre and the circus were those which appealed strongly to the sensual passions; such as the games of Flora, the postures of the pantomimes, and the ballet. Roman comedy, indeed, flourished for a short period; but only by throwing itself into the same career. The pander and the courtesan are the leading characters of Plautus, and the more modest Terence never attained an equal popularity. The different forms of vice have a continual tendency to act and react upon one another; and the intense craving after excitement which the amphitheatre must necessarily have produced, had probably no small influence in stimulating the orgies of sensuality which Tacitus and Suetonius describe.

But if comedy could to a certain extent flourish with the gladiatorial games, it was not so with tragedy. It is indeed true that the tragic actor can exhibit displays of more intense agony and of a grander heroism than were ever witnessed in the arena. His mission is not to paint nature as it exists in the light of day, but nature as it exists in the heart of man. His gestures, his tones, his looks, are such as would never have been exhibited by the person he represents; but they display to the audience the full intensity of the emotions which that person would have felt, but which he would have been unable adequately to reveal. But to those who were habituated to the intense realism of the amphitheatre, the idealized suffering of the stage was unimpressive. All the genius of a Siddons or a Ristori would fail to move an audience who had continually seen living men fall bleeding and mangled at their feet. One of the first functions of the stage is to raise to the highest point the susceptibility to disgust. When Horace said that Medea should not kill her children upon the stage, he enunciated not a mere arbitrary rule, but one which grows necessarily out of the development of the drama. It is an essential characteristic of a refined and cultivated taste to be shocked and offended at the spectacle of bloodshed; and the theatre, which somewhat dangerously dissociates sentiment from action, and causes men to waste their compassion on ideal sufferings, is at least a barrier against the extreme forms of cruelty by developing this susceptibility to the highest degree. The gladiatorial games, on the other hand, destroyed all sense of disgust, and therefore all refinement of taste; and they rendered the permanent triumph of the drama impossible.

It is abundantly evident, both from history and from present experience, that the instinctive shock or natural feeling of disgust caused by the sight of the sufferings of men is not generically different from that which is caused by the sight of the sufferings of animals. The latter, to those who are not accustomed to it, is intensely painful. The former continually becomes by use a matter of absolute indifference. If the repugnance which is felt in the one case appears greater than in the other, it is not on account of any innate sentiment which commands us to reverence our species, but simply because our imagination finds less difficulty in realizing human than animal suffering, and also because education has strengthened our feelings in the one case much more than in the other. There is, however, no fact more clearly established than that when men have regarded it as not a crime to kill some class of their fellow-men, they have soon learnt to do so with no more natural compunction or hesitation than they would exhibit in killing a wild animal. This is the normal condition of savage men. Colonists and Red Indians even now often shoot each other with precisely the same indifference as they shoot beasts of prey; and the whole history of warfare—especially when warfare was conducted on more savage principles than at present—is an illustration of the fact. Startling, therefore, as it may now appear, it is in no degree unnatural that Roman spectators should have contemplated with perfect equanimity the slaughter of men. The Spaniard, who is brought in infancy to the bull-ring, soon learns to gaze with indifference or with pleasure upon sights before which the unpracticed eye of the stranger quails with horror; and the same process would be equally efficacious had the spectacle been the sufferings of men.

We now look back with indignation upon this indifference; but yet, although it may be hard to realize, it is probably true that there is scarcely a human being who might not by custom be so indurated as to share it. Had the most benevolent person lived in a country in which the innocence of these games was deemed axiomatic, had he been taken to them in his very childhood and accustomed to associate them with his earliest dreams of romance, and had he then been left simply to the play of the emotions, the first paroxysm of horror would have soon subsided, the shrinking repugnance that followed would have grown weaker and weaker, the feeling of interest would have been aroused, and the time would probably come in which it would reign alone. But even this absolute indifference to the sight of human suffering does not represent the full evil resulting from the gladiatorial games. That some men are so constituted as to be capable of taking a real and lively pleasure in the simple contemplation of suffering as suffering, and without any reference to their own interests, is a proposition which has been strenuously denied by those in whose eyes vice is nothing more than a displacement, or exaggeration, of lawful self-regarding feelings; and others, who have admitted the reality of the phenomenon, have treated it as a very rare and exceptional disease. That it is so—at least in its extreme forms—in the present condition of society, may reasonably be hoped; though I imagine that few persons who have watched the habits of boys would question that to take pleasure in giving at least some degree of pain is sufficiently common, and though it is not quite certain that all the sports of adult men would be entered into with exactly the same zest if their victims were not sentient beings. But in every society in which atrocious punishments have been common, this side of human nature has acquired an undoubted prominence. It is related of Claudius that his special delight at the gladiatorial shows was in watching the countenances of the dying; for he had learnt to take an artistic pleasure in observing the variations of their agony. When the gladiator lay prostrate it was customary for the spectators to give the sign with their thumbs, indicating whether they desired him to be spared or slain; and the giver of the show reaped most popularity when, in the latter case, he permitted no consideration of economy to make him hesitate to sanction the popular award.

Besides this, the mere desire for novelty impelled the people to every excess or refinement of barbarity. The simple combat became at last insipid, and every variety of atrocity was devised to stimulate the flagging interest. At one time a bear and a bull, chained together, rolled in fierce contest along the sand; at another, criminals dressed in the skins of wild beasts were thrown to bulls, which were maddened by red-hot irons or by darts tipped with burning pitch. Four hundred bears were killed on a single day under Caligula; three hundred on another day under Claudius. Under Nero, four hundred tigers fought with bulls and elephants; four hundred bears and three hundred lions were slaughtered by his soldiers. In a single day, at the dedication of the Colosseum by Titus, five thousand animals perished. Under Trajan, the games continued for one hundred and twenty-three successive days. Lions, tigers, elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotami, giraffes, bulls, stags, even crocodiles and serpents, were employed to give novelty to the spectacle. Nor was any form of human suffering wanting. The first Gordian, when edile, gave twelve spectacles, in each of which from one hundred and fifty to five hundred pair of gladiators appeared. Eight hundred pair fought at the triumph of Aurelian. Ten thousand men fought during the games of Trajan. Nero illumined his gardens during the night by Christians burning in their pitchy shirts. Under Domitian, an army of feeble dwarfs was compelled to fight; and more than once, female gladiators descended to perish in the arena. A criminal personating a fictitious character was nailed to a cross, and there torn by a bear. Another, representing Scævola, was compelled to hold his hand in a real flame. A third, as Hercules, was burnt alive upon the pile. So intense was the craving for blood, that a prince was less unpopular if he neglected the distribution of corn than if he neglected the games; and Nero himself, on account of his munificence in this respect, was probably the sovereign who was most beloved by the Roman multitude. Heliogabalus and Galerius are reported, when dining, to have regaled themselves with the sight of criminals torn by wild beasts. It was said of the latter that «he never supped without human blood.»

It is well for us to look steadily on such facts as these. They display more vividly than any mere philosophical disquisition the abyss of depravity into which it is possible for human nature to sink. They furnish us with striking proofs of the reality of the moral progress we have attained; and they enable us in some degree to estimate the regenerating influence that Christianity has exercised in the world. For the destruction of the gladiatorial games is all its work. Philosophers indeed might deplore them, gentle natures might shrink from their contagion; but to the multitude they possessed a fascination which nothing but the new religion could overcome.

SYSTEMATIC CHARITY AS A MORAL OUTGROWTH, PAST AND PRESENT

The history of charity presents so few salient features, so little that can strike the imagination or arrest the attention, that it is usually almost wholly neglected by historians; and it is easy to conceive what inadequate notions of our existing charities could be gleaned from the casual allusions in plays or poems, in political histories or court memoirs. There can, however, be no question that neither in practice nor in theory, neither in the institutions that were founded nor in the place that was assigned to it in the scale of duties, did charity in antiquity occupy a position at all comparable to that which it has obtained by Christianity. Nearly all relief was a State measure, dictated much more by policy than by benevolence; and the habit of selling young children, the innumerable expositions, the readiness of the poor to enroll themselves as gladiators, and the frequent famines, show how large was the measure of unrelieved distress. A very few pagan examples of charity have indeed descended to us. Among the Greeks we find Epaminondas ransoming captives, and collecting dowers for poor girls; Cimon feeding the hungry and clothing the naked; Bias purchasing, emancipating, and furnishing with dowers some captive girls of Messina. Tacitus has described with enthusiasm how, after a catastrophe near Rome, the rich threw open their houses and taxed all their resources to relieve the sufferers. There existed too among the poor, both of Greece and Rome, mutual insurance societies, which undertook to provide for their sick and infirm members. The very frequent reference to mendicancy in the Latin writers shows that beggars, and therefore those who relieved beggars, were numerous. The duty of hospitality was also strongly enjoined, and was placed under the special protection of the supreme Deity. But the active, habitual, and detailed charity of private persons, which is so conspicuous a feature in all Christian societies, was scarcely known in antiquity, and there are not more than two or three moralists who have even noticed it. Of these the chief rank belongs to Cicero, who devoted two very judicious but somewhat cold chapters to the subject. Nothing, he said, is more suitable to the nature of man than beneficence or liberality; but there are many cautions to be urged in practicing it. We must take care that our bounty is a real blessing to the person we relieve; that it does not exceed our own means; that it is not, as was the case with Sylla and Cæsar, derived from the spoliation of others; that it springs from the heart and not from ostentation; that the claims of gratitude are preferred to the mere impulses of compassion; and that due regard is paid both to the character and to the wants of the recipient.

Christianity for the first time made charity a rudimentary virtue, giving it a leading place in the moral type and in the exhortations of its teachers. Besides its general influence in stimulating the affections, it effected a complete revolution in this sphere, by regarding the poor as the special representatives of the Christian Founder; and thus making the love of Christ, rather than the love of man, the principle of charity. Even in the days of persecution, collections for the relief of the poor were made at the Sunday meetings. The agapæ, or feasts of love, were intended mainly for the poor; and food that was saved by the fasts was devoted to their benefit. A vast organization of charity, presided over by the bishops, and actively directed by the deacons, soon ramified over Christendom, till the bond of charity became the bond of unity, and the most distant sections of the Christian Church corresponded by the interchange of mercy. Long before the era of Constantine, it was observed that the charities of the Christians were so extensive — it may perhaps be said so excessive — that they drew very many impostors to the Church; and when the victory of Christianity was achieved, the enthusiasm for charity displayed itself in the erection of numerous institutions that were altogether unknown to the pagan world. A Roman lady named Fabiola, in the fourth century, founded in Rome as an act of penance the first public hospital; and the charity planted by that woman's hand overspread the world, and will alleviate to the end of time the darkest anguish of humanity. Another hospital was soon after founded by St. Pammachus; another of great celebrity by St. Basil, at Cæsarea. St. Basil also erected at Cæsarea what was probably the first asylum for lepers. Xenodochia, or refuges for strangers, speedily arose, especially along the paths of the pilgrims. St. Pammachus founded one at Ostia; Paula and Melania founded others at Jerusalem. The Council of Nice ordered that one should be erected in every city. In the time of St. Chrysostom the Church of Antioch supported three thousand widows and virgins, besides strangers and sick. Legacies for the poor became common; and it was not unfrequent for men and women who desired to live a life of peculiar sanctity, and especially for priests who attained the episcopacy, to bestow their entire properties in charity. Even the early Oriental monks, who for the most part were extremely removed from the active and social virtues, supplied many noble examples of charity. St. Ephrem, in a time of pestilence, emerged from his solitude to found and superintend a hospital at Edessa. A monk named Thalasius collected blind beggars in an asylum on the banks of the Euphrates. A merchant named Apollonius founded on Mount Nitria a gratuitous dispensary for the monks. The monks often assisted by their labors, provinces that were suffering from pestilence or famine. We may trace the remains of the pure socialism that marked the first phase of the Christian community, in the emphatic language with which some of the Fathers proclaimed charity to be a matter not of mercy but of justice; maintaining that all property is based on usurpation, that the earth by right is common to all men, and that no man can claim a superabundant supply of its goods except as an administrator for others. A Christian, it was maintained, should devote at least one-tenth of his profits to the poor.

The enthusiasm of charity thus manifested in the Church speedily attracted the attention of the pagans. The ridicule of Lucian, and the vain efforts of Julian to produce a rival system of charity within the limits of paganism, emphatically attested both its pre-eminence and its catholicity. During the pestilences that desolated Carthage in A. D. 326, and Alexandria in the reigns of Gallienus and of Maximian, while the pagans fled panic-stricken from the contagion, the Christians extorted the admiration of their fellow-countrymen by the courage with which they rallied around their bishops, consoled the last hours of the sufferers, and buried the abandoned dead. In the rapid increase of pauperism arising from the emancipation of numerous slaves, their charity found free scope for action, and its resources were soon taxed to the utmost by the horrors of the barbarian invasions. The conquest of Africa by Genseric deprived Italy of the supply of corn upon which it almost wholly depended, arrested the gratuitous distribution by which the Roman poor were mainly supported, and produced all over the land the most appalling calamities. The history of Italy became one monotonous tale of famine and pestilence, of starving populations and ruined cities. But everywhere amid this chaos of dissolution we may detect the majestic form of the Christian priest mediating between the hostile forces, straining every nerve to lighten the calamities around him. When the imperial city was captured and plundered by the hosts of Alaric, a Christian church remained a secure sanctuary, which neither the passions nor the avarice of the Goths transgressed. When a fiercer than Alaric had marked out Rome for his prey, the pope St. Leo, arrayed in his sacerdotal robes, confronted the victorious Hun as the ambassador of his fellow-countrymen; and Attila, overpowered by religious awe, turned aside in his course. When, two years later, Rome lay at the mercy of Genseric, the same pope interposed with the Vandal conqueror, and obtained from him a partial cessation of the massacre. The archdeacon Pelagius interceded with similar humanity and similar success, when Rome had been captured by Totila. In Gaul, Troyes is said to have been saved from destruction by the influence of St. Lupus, and Orleans by the influence of

St. Agnan. In Britain an invasion of the Picts was averted by St. Germain of Auxerre.* The relations of rulers to their subjects, and of tribunals to the poor, were modified by the same intervention. When Antioch was threatened with destruction on account of its rebellion against Theodosius, the anchorites poured forth from the neighboring deserts to intercede with the ministers of the Emperor, while the archbishop Flavian went himself as a suppliant to Constantinople. St. Ambrose imposed public penance on Theodosius, on account of the massacre of Thessalonica. Synesius excommunicated for his oppressions a governor named Andronicus; and two French Councils, in the sixth century, imposed the same penalty on all great men who arbitrarily ejected the poor. Special laws were found necessary to restrain the turbulent charity of some priests and monks, who impeded the course of justice, and even snatched criminals from the hands of the law. St. Abraham, St. Epiphanius, and St. Basil are all said to have obtained the remission or reduction of oppressive imposts. To provide for the interests of widows and orphans was part of the official ecclesiastical duty, and a Council of Macon anathematized any ruler who brought them to trial without first apprising the bishop of the diocese. A Council of Toledo, in the fifth century, threatened with excommunication all who robbed priests, monks, or poor men, or refused to listen to their expostulations. One of the chief causes of the inordinate power acquired by the clergy was their mediatorial office; and their gigantic wealth was in a great degree due to the legacies of those who regarded them as the trustees of the poor. As time rolled on, charity assumed many forms, and every monastery became a centre from which it radiated. By the monks the nobles were overawed, the poor protected, the sick tended, travelers sheltered, prisoners ransomed, the remotest spheres of suffering explored. During the darkest period of the Middle Ages, monks founded a refuge for pilgrims amid the horrors of the Alpine snows. A solitary hermit often planted himself, with his little boat, by a bridgeless stream, and the charity of his life was to ferry over the traveler. When the hideous disease of leprosy extended its ravages over Europe, when the minds of men were filled with terror, not only by its loathsomeness and its contagion, but also by the notion that it was in a peculiar sense supernatural, new hospitals and refuges overspread Europe, and monks flocked in multitudes to serve in them. Sometimes, the legends say, the leper's form was in a moment transfigured; and he who came to tend the most loathsome of mankind received his reward, for he found himself in the presence of his Lord.

There is no fact of which an historian becomes more speedily or more painfully conscious than the great difference between the importance and the dramatic interest of the subjects he treats. Wars or massacres, the horrors of martyrdom or the splendors of individual prowess, are susceptible of such brilliant coloring that with but little literary skill they can be so portrayed that their importance is adequately realized, and they appeal powerfully to the emotions of the reader. But this vast and unostentatious movement of charity, operating in the village hamlet and in the lonely hospital, stanching the widow's tears and following all the windings of the poor man's griefs, presents few features the imagination can grasp, and leaves no deep impression upon the mind. The greatest things are often those which are most imperfectly realized; and surely no achievements of the Christian Church are more truly great than those which it has effected in the sphere of charity. For the first time in the history of mankind, it has inspired many thousands of men and women, at the sacrifice of all worldly interests, and often under circumstances of extreme discomfort or danger, to devote their entire lives to the single object of assuaging the sufferings of humanity. It has covered the globe with countless institutions of mercy, absolutely unknown to the whole pagan world. It has indissolubly united, in the minds of men, the idea of supreme goodness with that of active and constant benevolence. It has placed in every parish a religious minister, who, whatever may be his other functions, has at least been officially charged with the superintendence of an organization of charity, and who finds in this office one of the most important as well as one of the most legitimate sources of his power.

THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SEXES

THERE are few more curious subjects of inquiry than the distinctive differences between the sexes, and the manner in which those differences have affected the ideal types of different ages, nations, philosophies, and religions. Physically, men have the indisputable superiority in strength, and women in beauty. Intellectually, a certain inferiority of the female sex can hardly be denied when we remember how almost exclusively the foremost places in every department of science, literature, and art have been occupied by men, how infinitesimally small is the number of women who have shown in any form the very highest order of genius, how many of the greatest men have achieved their greatness in defiance of the most adverse circumstances, and how completely women have failed in obtaining the first position even in music or painting, for the cultivation of which their circumstances would appear most propitious. It is as impossible to find a female Raphael or a female Handel as a female Shakespeare or Newton. Women are intellectually more desultory and volatile than men; they are more occupied with particular instances than with general principles; they judge rather by intuitive perceptions than by deliberate reasoning or past experience. They are, however, usually superior to men in nimbleness and rapidity of thought, and in the gift of tact or the power of seizing speedily and faithfully the finer inflections of feeling; and they have therefore often attained very great eminence in conversation, as letter-writers, as actresses, and as novelists.

Morally, the general superiority of women over men is, I think, unquestionable. If we take the somewhat coarse and inadequate criterion of police statistics, we find that while the male and female populations are nearly the same in number, the crimes committed by men are usually rather more than five times as numerous as those committed by women; and although it may be justly observed that men, as the stronger sex, and the sex upon whom the burden of supporting the family is thrown, have more temptations than women, it must be remembered, on the other hand, that extreme poverty which verges upon starvation is most common among women, whose means of livelihood are most restricted, and whose earnings are smallest and most precarious. Self-sacrifice is the most conspicuous element of a virtuous and religious character; and it is certainly far less common among men than among women, whose whole lives are usually spent in yielding to the will and consulting the pleasures of another. There are two great departments of virtue,—the impulsive, or that which springs spontaneously from the emotions; and the deliberative, or that which is performed in obedience to the sense of duty; and in both of these I imagine women are superior to men. Their sensibility is greater, they are more chaste both in thought and act, more tender to the erring, more compassionate to the suffering, more affectionate to all about them. On the other hand, those who have traced the course of the wives of the poor, and of many who though in narrow circumstances can hardly be called poor, will probably admit that in no other class do we so often find entire lives spent in daily persistent self-denial, in the patient endurance of countless trials, in the ceaseless and deliberate sacrifice of their own enjoyments to the well-being or the prospects of others. Women, however, though less prone than men to intemperance and brutality, are in general more addicted to the petty forms of vanity, jealousy, spitefulness, and ambition; and they are also inferior to men in active courage. In the courage of endurance they are commonly superior; but their passive courage is not so much fortitude which bears and defies, as resignation which bears and bends. In the ethics of intellect they are decidedly inferior. To repeat an expression I have already employed, women very rarely love truth; though they love passionately what they call "the truth," —or opinions they have received from others,—and hate vehemently those who differ from them. They are little capable of impartiality or of doubt; their thinking is chiefly a mode of feeling; though very generous in their acts, they are rarely generous in their opinions or in their judgments. They persuade rather than convince, and value belief rather as a source of consolation than as a faithful expression of the reality of things. They are less capable than men of perceiving qualifying circumstances, of admitting the existence of elements of good in systems to which they are opposed, of distinguishing the personal character of an opponent from the opinions he maintains. Men lean most to justice and women to mercy. Men excel in energy, self-reliance, perseverance, and magnanimity; women in humility, gentleness, modesty, and endurance. The realizing imagination which causes us to pity and to love is more sensitive in women than in men, and it is especially more capable of dwelling on the unseen. Their religious or devotional realizations are incontestably more vivid; and it is probable that while a father is most moved by the death of a child in his presence, a mother generally feels most the death of a child in some distant land. But though more intense, the sympathies of women are commonly less wide than those of men. Their imaginations individualize more; their affections are in consequence concentrated rather on leaders than on causes; and if they care for a great cause, it is generally because it is represented by a great man, or connected with some one whom they love. In politics, their enthusiasm is more naturally loyalty than patriotism. In history, they are even more inclined than men to dwell exclusively upon biographical incidents or characteristics as distinguished from the march of general causes. In benevolence, they excel in charity, which alleviates individual suffering, rather than in philanthropy, which deals with large masses and is more frequently employed in preventing than in allaying calamity.

It was a remark of Winckelmann that "the supreme beauty of Greek art is rather male than female"; and the justice of this remark has been amply corroborated by the greater knowledge we have of late years attained of the works of the Phidian period, in which art achieved its highest perfection, and in which, at the same time, force and freedom and masculine grandeur were its pre-eminent characteristics. A similar observation may be made of the moral ideal of which ancient art was simply the expression. In antiquity the virtues that were most admired were almost exclusively those which are distinctively masculine. Courage, self-assertion, magnanimity, and above all, patriotism, were the leading features of the ideal type; and chastity, modesty, and charity, the gentler and the domestic virtues, which are especially feminine, were greatly undervalued. With the single exception of conjugal fidelity, none of the virtues that were very highly prized were virtues distinctively or pre-eminently feminine. With this exception, nearly all the most illustrious women of antiquity were illustrious chiefly because they overcame the natural conditions of their sex. It is a characteristic fact that the favorite female ideal of the artists appears to have been the Amazon. We may admire the Spartan mother and the mother of the Gracchi, repressing every sign of grief when their children were sacrificed upon the altar of their country; we may wonder at the majestic courage of a Porcia and an Arria: but we extol them chiefly because, being women, they emancipated themselves from the frailty of their sex, and displayed an heroic fortitude worthy of the strongest and the bravest of men. We may bestow an equal admiration upon the noble devotion and charity of a St. Elizabeth of Hungary or of a Mrs. Fry; but we do not admire them because they displayed these virtues, although they were women, for we feel that their virtues were of the kind which the female nature is most fitted to produce. The change from the heroic to the saintly ideal, from the ideal of paganism to the ideal of Christianity, was a change from a type which was essentially male to one which was essentially feminine. Of all the great schools of philosophy, no other reflected so faithfully the Roman conception of moral excellence as Stoicism; and the greatest Roman exponent of Stoicism summed up its character in a single sentence when he pronounced it to be beyond all other sects the most emphatically masculine. On the other hand, an ideal type in which meekness, gentleness, patience, humility, faith, and love are the most prominent features, is not naturally male but female. A reason probably deeper than the historical ones which are commonly alleged, why sculpture has always been peculiarly pagan and painting peculiarly Christian, may be found in the fact that sculpture is especially suited to represent male beauty, or the beauty of strength, and painting female beauty, or the beauty of softness; and that pagan sentiment was chiefly a glorification of the masculine qualities of strength and courage and conscious virtue, while Christian sentiment is chiefly a glorification of the feminine qualities of gentleness, humility, and love. The painters whom the religious feeling of Christendom has recognized as the most faithful exponents of Christian sentiment have always been those who infused a large measure of feminine beauty even into their male characters; and we never, or scarcely ever, find that the same artist has been conspicuously successful in delineating both Christian and pagan types. Michael Angelo, whose genius loved to expatiate on the sublimity of strength and defiance, failed signally in his representations of the Christian ideal; and Perugino was equally unsuccessful when he sought to portray the features of the heroes of antiquity. The position that was gradually assigned to the Virgin, as the female ideal in the belief and the devotion of Christendom, was a consecration or an expression of the new value that was attached to the feminine virtues.

The general superiority of women to men in the strength of their religious emotions, and their natural attraction to a religion which made personal attachment to its Founder its central duty, and which imparted an unprecedented dignity and afforded an unprecedented scope to their characteristic virtues, account for the very conspicuous position that female influence assumed in the great work of the conversion of the Roman Empire. In no other important movement of thought was it so powerful or so acknowledged. In the ages of persecution, female figures occupy many of the foremost places in the ranks of martyrdom; and pagan and Christian writers alike attest the alacrity with which women flocked to the Church, and the influence they exercised in its favor over the male members of their families. The mothers of St. Augustine, St. Chrysostom, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and Theodoret, had all a leading part in the conversion of their sons. St. Helena the mother of Constantine, Flacilla the wife of Theodosius the Great, St. Pulcheria the sister of Theodosius the Younger, and Placidia the mother of Valentinian III., were among the most conspicuous defenders of the faith. In the heretical sects the same zeal was manifested; and Arius, Priscillian, and Montanus were all supported by troops of zealous female devotees. In the career of asceticism, women took a part little if at all inferior to men; while in the organization of the great work of charity they were pre-eminent. For no other field of active labor are women so admirably suited as for this; and although we may trace from the earliest period, in many creeds and ages, individual instances of their influence in allaying the sufferings of the distressed, it may be truly said that their instinct and genius of charity had never before the dawn of Christianity obtained full scope for action. Fabiola, Paula, Melania, and a host of other noble ladies devoted their time and fortunes mainly to founding and extending vast institutions of charity, some of them of a kind before unknown in the world. The Empress Flacilla was accustomed to tend with her own hands the sick in the hospitals; and a readiness to discharge such offices was deemed the first duty of a Christian wife. From age to age the impulse thus communicated has been felt. There has been no period however corrupt, there has been no church however superstitious, that has not been adorned by many Christian women devoting their entire lives to assuaging the sufferings of men; and the mission of charity thus instituted has not been more efficacious in diminishing the sum of human wretchedness, than in promoting the moral dignity of those by whom it was conducted.

CHARLES MARIE RENÉ LECONTE DE LISLE

(1818–1894)

Leconte de Lisle, according to the judgment of his fellow-poets, will live in French literature for the classic perfection of his verse. Yet he has never been popular, although he longed to touch men's hearts. His distinction is the rare imaginative pleasure he offers those who can enjoy abstract beauty.

Charles Marie René Leconte de Lisle was born in 1818 on the Island of Bourbon, where the luxuriance of the tropics fostered his passion for natural beauty. His education finished, his father wished him to become a planter like himself; but the son longed to see the world. He went to France; studied law at Rennes; traveled for some time; and when nearly thirty settled at Paris. He was an ardent classicist. To his knowledge of antique art and literature he had added his personal impressions of many lands, many peoples, and many religions. Now he became intimately acquainted with agitated, worldly Paris; and she repelled him.

Leconte de Lisle

His circumstances aided to depress him. His parents had never understood his impractical aspirations; and possibly the determined self-repression evident in his poems results in part from his lack of home sympathy. Soon after his arrival in Paris, he earnestly supported an insurrection of slaves in his island home. This rash generosity provoked his father to stop his allowance; and he was obliged to teach for his living.

The remainder of his life was outwardly uneventful,—its chief events the distinctions which gradually came to him. Created an officer of the Legion of Honor, in 1886 he was chosen to the French Academy as the successor of Victor Hugo. Nine years earlier, when defeated, he had proudly declared that the vote received from Hugo meant as much to him as election. From 1873 until his death in 1894 he was assistant librarian at the Library of the Luxembourg; and there, in the fine old Palace set in the ancient garden, he drew congenial friends about him and spoke with the authority of a master to young disciples in poetry.

He first became known for skillful translations of Homer, Theocritus, Horace, and Sophocles, for which he was not well paid. But the reputation they brought him induced Napoleon III. to offer him a handsome pension if he would dedicate his work to the Prince Imperial. This De Lisle refused to do; and he was then granted a pension of three hundred francs a month, which he drew until the fall of the Empire. With a brilliant group of young poets, who, surfeited with the exaggerated romanticism which had had its day, were seeking finer, more artistic forms of expression, he published ‹Le Parnasse Contemporain› (Modern Parnassus), several volumes of verse, which gained its authors the title of Parnassians, and constituted theirs a distinct school of poetry. Its primary tenet was the impersonality of art. The Parnassians maintained that Rousseau-like confessions of joys and sins and sufferings — egotistic demands for sympathy — should not be thrust upon the public. They agreed that the emotional element in poetry did not mean individual vagaries, but universal human experience expressed with all possible beauty and delicacy of form, and with convincing truth. This creed was abused; but unquestionably ‹Le Parnasse Contemporain› refined public taste and inspired poets with more definite ideals.

Among the first to note De Lisle's merit was Sainte-Beuve, who gave a reception in his honor, and introduced him to the poet Laprade; from whom, as from Gautier, he learned a lesson of vivid description, and of the exquisite precision which, as Brunetière says, makes his verse as imperishable as marble.

He was too painstaking a craftsman to compose rapidly; and even after they were written, the ‹Poèmes Antiques› awaited a publisher for several years. From its appearance in 1852, this volume received distinguished treatment from critics and fellow-poets. In it, as in ‹Poèmes et Poésies (1854), ‹Poèmes Barbares› (1862), — to which the Academy awarded the Jean Regnard prize of ten thousand francs, — and ‹Poèmes Tragiques› (1884), De Lisle sought his theme in the remote; for he had a bitterly disillusioned spirit, and knew the solitary suffering of a nature unfitted for modern society. It was because he was tortured by self-consciousness that this «first of the Impassives» longed to forget himself, and make his poems an impersonal reflection of universal life. Hence the relief with which his imagination escapes to the mere physical sensation of brute creation. Hence the glowing power with which he draws the dying lion, the sleeping condor, and the stealthy beasts of the jungle.

Because he could not bear the imperfection of his actual environment, he searched in Greece and India, in the far north and in southern seas, among primitive savages as in ancient art, for a nourishing dream of beauty. He loved the simple, positive beauty of color and form in the outward world. He is the poet of nature; not Nature personified, but rather a great resistless energy which was one day to absorb him. Beauty was his only religion; for his modern science forbade him faith, while making him crave truth at all costs. He was savant as well as poet, whose researches led him, in spite of his own wishes, to regard all religions as transitory stages in human development. Like Renan, he had sympathy for the underlying ideal of each; and his imagination helped him to temporary self-forgetfulness in each, although he could find nothing final.

THE MANCHY

From ‹Poèmes Barbares›

Clothed in your filmy muslin gown,
Every Sunday morning, you
Would come in your manchy of bamboo
Down the footpaths to the town.

The church-bell rang out noisily;
The salt breeze waved the lofty cane;
The sun shook out a golden rain
On the savannah's grassy sea.

With rings on wrist and ankle flat,
And yellow kerchief on the crown,
Your two telingas carried down
Your litter of Manila mat.

Slim, in tunics white, they sang
As 'neath the pole of bamboo bent,
With hands upon their hips, they went
Steadily by the long Etang.

Past banks where Creoles used to come
To smoke their ancient pipes; past bands
Of blacks disporting on the sands
To the sound of the Madagascar drum.

The tamarind's breath was on the air;
Out in the glittering surf the flocks
Of birds swung through the billow's shocks
And plunged beneath the foaming blare.

While hung—your sandal loosed—the tips
Of one pink foot at the manchy's side,
In the shade of the letchi branching wide
With fruit less purple than your lips;

While like a flower, a butterfly
Of blue and scarlet fluttered on
Your skin an instant, and was gone,
Leaving his colors in good-by.

We saw between the cambric's mist
Your earrings on the pillows lain;
While your long lashes veiled in vain
Your eyes of sombre amethyst.

'Twas thus you came, those mornings sweet,
With grace so gentle, to High Mass,
Borne slowly down the mountain pass
By your faithful Hindoos' steady feet.

But now where our dry sand-bar gleams
Beneath the dog-grass near the sea,
You rest with dead ones dear to me,
O charm of my first tender dreams!

PAN

From ‹Poèmes Antiques›

ROISTERING Pan, the Arcadian shepherd's god,
Crested like ram and like the wild goat shod,
Makes soft complaint upon his oaten horn.
When hill and valley turn to gold with morn,
He wanders joying with the dancing band
Of nymphs across the moss and flowering land.
The lynx-skin clothes his back; his brows are crowned
With hyacinth and crocus interwound,
And with his glee the echoes long rejoice.
The barefoot nymphs assemble at the voice,
And lightly by the crystal fountain's side,
Surrounding Pan in rhythmic circles glide.
In vine-bound grottoes, in remote retreats,
At noon the god sleeps out the parching heats
Beside some hidden brook, below the domes
Of swaying oaks, where sunlight never comes.

But when the night, with starry girdle bound,
Wafts her long veils across the blue profound,
Pan, passion-flushed, tracks through the shadowy glade
In swift pursuit the nimble-footed maid;
Clasps her in flight, and with exulting cries
Through the white moonlight carries off his prize.

THE BULLS

From ‹Poèmes Barbares›

The sea's broad desert makes a bar of gold
Against the blue of heaven's unruffled fold.
Alone, a roseate loiterer in the sky
Wreathes like a languid reptile stretched on high
Above the surging of the mountain-chain.
O'er the savannah breathes a dreamy strain
To where the bulls, with massive horns high dressed
And shining coat, deep eye and muscled breast,
Crop at their will the salt grass of the coast.
Two negroes of Antongil, still engrossed
In the long day's dull stupor, at their ease
With chin in hands and elbows on their knees,
Smoke their black pipes. But in the changing sky
The herd's fierce chieftain scents the nightfall nigh,
Lifts his square muzzle flecked with silver foam
And bellows o'er the sea his summons home.

Translations made for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by Thomas Walsh.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

(1866–)

One of the younger school of English literary workers, who stand for the newer methods and aims, is Richard Le Gallienne, of repute as poet and essayist. Born in Liverpool in 1866, he got his education at the college of that city; then came to London and took the position of secretary to Wilson Barrett, the actor-playwright, holding it for several years. Later he became literary critic of the London Star, and by his writing for this and other publications became identified with the new in art and letters,—one of the fellowship of the younger literati.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

Le Gallienne has done, prose and verse, nearly a dozen volumes already; a considerable literary baggage for so young a man. ‘Prose Fancies,’ in two series, contain the main qualities of his essay work: grace, poetry, sometimes running into sentimentality, something of preciosity in seeking for the fine phrase, delicate fancy, and now and then genuine tenderness and beauty. The faults seem partly those of immaturity, partly due to a tendency to pose. ‘Retrospective Reviews’ and ‘The Book-Bills of Narcissus’ are further illustrations of his style and content; the latter being a decidedly happy piece of whimsy. By far the strongest prose work Le Gallienne has done is his ‘Religion of a Literary Man’; full of suggestive and thoughtful things, testifying to wide reading, and revealing the more earnest side of the man. A critical work of value is Le Gallienne's ‘George Meredith: Some Characteristics,’ on the whole the most perceptive appreciation of the great novelist that has appeared. The latest prose work, ‘The Quest of the Golden Girl,’ which describes the adventures of a young man who goes a-seeking the ideal feminine, to find her in a happy marriage, has charm and many poetic touches, though marked by sins against both æsthetics and ethics. It is very autobiographic, too,—this being a characteristic of Le Gallienne in all he writes,—a tendency pushed to the limit of taste. That he has attraction in the essay when at his best, cannot be denied; and in the main he expresses the romantic, chivalric, ideal aspects of life. His blemishes are not fundamental.

In his books of verse—‹English Poems,› ‹My Lady's Sonnets,› ‹Robert Louis Stevenson, and Other Poems›—Le Gallienne exhibits the modern phenomenon of a writer of romantic impulse striving to be realistic withal. This is illustrated in his poems which have London for motive; and in truth some of his most virile conceptions are those describing the streets and sights of the mighty English capital. But most readers will like best his purely fanciful or daintily imaginative verse, playful yet tender, with song in it and the smile that is not far from tears.

In fine, Richard Le Gallienne may be regarded as a pleasing writer and a promising one, who is likely to rid himself of certain mannerisms and lose himself entirely in the art which beyond doubt he loves.

DEDICATION

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Poor are the gifts of the poet,—
Nothing but words!
The gifts of kings are gold,
Silver and flocks and herds,
Garments of strange, soft silk,
Feathers of wonderful birds,
Jewels and precious stones,
And horses white as the milk,—
These are the gifts of kings;
But the gifts that the poet brings
Are nothing but words.

Forty thousand words!
Take them,—a gift of flies!
Words that should have been birds,
Words that should have been flowers,
Words that should have been stars
In the eternal skies.
Forty thousand words!
Forty thousand tears—
All out of two sad eyes.

A SEAPORT IN THE MOON

From ‹Prose Fancies› (Second Series). Copyright 1895, by Stone & Kimball, Chicago

No one is so hopelessly wrong about the stars as the astronomer; and I trust that you never pay any attention to his remarks on the moon. He knows as much about the moon as a coiffeur knows of the dreams of the fair lady whose beautiful neck he makes still more beautiful. There is but one opinion upon the moon,—namely, our own. And if you think that science is thus wronged, reflect a moment upon what science makes of things near at hand. Love, it says, is merely a play of pistil and stamen; our most fascinating poetry and art is "degeneration"; and human life, generally speaking, is sufficiently explained by the "carbon compounds." God-a-mercy! if science makes such grotesque blunders about radiant matters right under its nose, how can one think of taking its opinion upon matters so remote as the stars—or even the moon, which is comparatively near at hand?

Science says that the moon is a dead world; a cosmic ship littered with the skeletons of its crew, and from which every rat of vitality has long since escaped. It is the ghost that rises from its tomb every night to haunt its faithless lover, the world. It is a country of ancient silver mines, unworked for centuries. You may see the gaping mouths of the dark old shafts through your telescopes. You may even see the rusting pit tackle, the ruinous engine-houses, and the idle pick and shovel. Or you may say that it is counterfeit silver, coined to take in the young fools who love to gaze upon it. It is, so to speak, a bad half-a-crown.

As you will! but I am of Endymion's belief—and no one was ever more intimate with the moon. For me the moon is a country of great seaports, whither all the ships of our dreams come home. From all quarters of the world, every day of the week, there are ships sailing to the moon. They are the ships that sail just when and where you please. You take your passage on that condition. And it is ridiculous to think for what a trifle the captain will take you on so long a journey. If you want to come back, just to take an excursion and no more, just to take a lighted look at those coasts of rose and pearl, he will ask no more than a glass or two of bright wine;—indeed, when the captain is very kind, a flower will take you there and back in no time; if you want to stay whole days there, but still come back dreamy and strange, you may take a little dark root and smoke it in a silver pipe, or you may drink a little phial of poppy-juice, and thus you shall find the Lands of Heart's Desire; but if you are wise and would stay in that land forever, the terms are even easier,—a little powder shaken into a phial of water, a little piece of lead no bigger than a pea and a farthing's worth of explosive fire, and thus also you are in the Land of Heart's Desire forever.

I dreamed last night that I stood on the blustering windy wharf, and the dark ship was there. It was impatient, like all of us, to leave the world. Its funnels belched black smoke, its engines throbbed against the quay like arms that were eager to strike and be done, and a bell was beating impatient summons to be gone. The dark captain stood ready on the bridge, and he looked into each of our faces as we passed on board. "Is it for the long voyage?" he said. "Yes! the long voyage," I said; and his stern eyes seemed to soften as I answered.

At last we were all aboard, and in the twinkling of an eye were out of sight of land. Yet, once afloat, it seemed as though we should never reach our port in the moon. So it seemed to me as I lay awake in my little cabin, listening to the patient thud and throb of the great screws beating in the ship's side like a human heart.

Talking with my fellow voyagers, I was surprised to find that we were not all volunteers. Some in fact complained pitifully. They had, they said, been going about their business a day or two before, and suddenly a mysterious captain had laid hold of them, and pressed them to sail this unknown sea. Thus, without a word of warning they had been compelled to leave behind them all they held dear. This, one felt, was a little hard of the captain; but those of us whose position was exactly the reverse—who had friends on the other side, all whose hopes indeed were invested there—were too selfishly expectant of port to be severe on the captain who was taking us thither.

There were three friends I had especially set out to see: two young lovers who had emigrated to those colonies in the moon just after their marriage; and there was another. What a surprise it would be to all three! for I had written no letter to say I was coming. Indeed, it was just a sudden impulse, the pistol flash of a long desire.

I tried to imagine what the town would be like in which they were now living. I asked the captain, and he answered with a sad smile that it would be just exactly as I cared to dream it.

"Oh, well then," I thought, "I know what it will be like. There shall be a great restless tossing estuary, with Atlantic winds forever ruffling the sails of busy ships,—ships coming home with laughter, ships leaving home with sad sea-gull cries of farewell. And the shaggy tossing water shall be bounded on either bank with high granite walls, and on one bank shall be a fretted spire soaring, with a jangle of bells, from amid a tangle of masts, and underneath the bells and the masts shall go streets rising up from the strand; streets full of faces, and sweet with the smell of tar and the sea. O captain, will it be morning or night when we come to my city? In the morning my city is like a sea-blown rose; in the night it is bright as a sailor's star.

"If it be early morning, what shall I do? I will run to the house in which my friends lie in happy sleep, never to be parted again, and kiss my hand to their shrouded window; and then I will run on and on till the city is behind and the sweetness of country lanes is about me, and I will gather flowers as I run, from sheer wantonness of joy, and then at last, flushed and breathless, I will stand beneath her window. I shall stand and listen, and I shall hear her breathing right through the heavy curtains; and the hushed garden and the sleeping house will bid me keep silence, but I shall cry a great cry up to the morning star, and say, 'No, I will not keep silence. Mine is the voice she listens for in her sleep. She will wake again for no voice but mine. Dear one, awake; the morning of all mornings has come!'"

As I write, the moon looks down at me like a Madonna from the great canvas of the sky. She seems beautiful with the beauty of all the eyes that have looked up at her, sad with all the tears of all those eyes; like a silvered bowl brimming with the tears of dead lovers she seems. Yes, there are seaports in the moon; there are ships to take us there.

ESSAY-WRITING

From ‘Retrospective Reviews’

The necessity of giving pleasure to the writer is paramount; for in no form of literature is it so true that both the sowing and the reaping must be in gladness. This is, of course, true more or less of all writing; but especially true of the essay. The essay-writer must be pleased with himself, his theme, and the world. The moment he loses his *amour propre*, his inspiration flags. “When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,” the poet is often stung to write his finest poems; but not so the essayist. The jug of wine, the loaf of bread, the volume of old verses, a garrulous fire (and metaphorically speaking, a cheering bundle from Romeike), are the necessary conditions of his art. . . .

Facts to the essayist are indeed but thin excuses for his covertly talking about himself. Few essayists have the courage to say outright, like Whitman, “Myself I sing,” or even with the French critic, “I propose to talk of myself, apropos of Shakespeare, Molière, Hugo, etc.”: they still keep up the decency of pretending that they are to talk about the trivial subject with which they label each new chapter of ‘The Story of My Heart.’ . . .

The essayist, though he need not be learned, must have read and generally picked up a good deal; his mind must be stored with a motley collection of recollections and associations, which before he makes magic of them may well seem the merest rubbish. His mind, in fact, is like a boy's pocket, stuffed with discarded treasures of which his elders are not worthy: string, marbles, peg-tops, strange shells, bits of colored pebble, a few old coins of no value at the numismatist's; treasures strictly personal to himself, a chaos of which — with glee he knows it — none can make a cosmos but himself. . . . It is not till it has been realized that in and for itself learning is merely absurd, and solely valuable so far as the writer is concerned for the artistic use to be made of it, does the essayist become possible. In short, the essayist's great gift, whether playing on the surface like a merry flame, or operating beneath as an unseen leaven, is humor. Humor, more even than religion, will save us from ten thousand snares.

FRANÇOIS ÉLIE JULES LEMAÎTRE

(1853–)

"The history of French literature," says a fine observer, "is that of the perpetual storming of Paris by a handful of young adventurers, whose object is to demolish the existing formulæ of an always incomplete art, and to enthrone themselves victoriously in a new edifice which they propose to build upon the ruins. But no sooner has one set of innovators achieved success than another band begins to attack the victors of yesterday; and so battle follows battle, and revolution revolution." Thus have appeared in turn the classicists, the romanticists, the naturalists, the Parnassians, the mystics, the symbolists, the decadents, the neo-Catholics, with the schismatics from each new cult.

Lemaître

In such an environment, criticism must not only flourish but become a fine art. From Boileau to Sainte-Beuve, from Montaigne to Jules Janin, the line of literary critics is rich in shining names. In our own day, the objective and the subjective school of criticism has each its able adherents and proselytizers. Of the objective or scientific method, M. Brunetière may be called the foremost exemplar, the great Darwinian. Of the subjective or imaginative camp, the Renanists, M. Jules Lemaître is the authoritative interpreter, unless the charming and subtle Anatole France may be allowed an equal rank.

"As it seems to me," writes M. France, "criticism, like philosophy, like history, is in a way a novel, for the use of cautious and earnest minds; as every novel, rightly understood, becomes an autobiography. The good critic is he who makes you comprehend the adventures of his own soul in the midst of masterpieces. There can be no objective criticism, as there can be no objective art. Whoever imagines that he puts into his work anything whatever except himself is the victim of illusion. We can never get outside ourselves. . . . We are imprisoned for life, as it were, in our own personality. Let us then make the best of it,—which is to admit with a good grace our lamentable state, and to acknowledge that we are talking about ourselves whenever we have not the strength of mind not to talk at all. To be entirely candid the critic ought to say, ‹Gentlemen, it is my intention to speak about my attitude towards Shakespeare, Racine, Pascal, or Goethe. They furnish me a very good excuse.›» To which Lemaître himself adds: «A critic inevitably puts his temperament and his personal conception of life into his commentaries; for it is with his own mind that he deals with other men's minds. Criticism is in reality a representation of the world, which is as personal, as relative, as baseless, and therefore as interesting, as that representation in any other branch of literature.»

Jules Lemaître was born at Vennecy, Department of the Loire, in 1853. He was educated for the profession of teaching; graduating with high honors from the École Normale in 1875, and filling the chair of rhetoric at Havre for the next five years. Two years in Algiers and a year at Besançon prepared him for a professorship in the faculty of Grenoble. But the Muse would have her own. In another year he resigned the safe dignity of the scholar's chair for the uncertain shelter of the author's garret. He had already published two volumes of poems — described by the reviewers as verses of the rhymer rather than the poet — and a few essays and stories, which obtained him a hearing in the Revue Bleue. In the course of three months he contributed three critical reviews on Renan, Ohnet, and Zola. The freshness, the insight, and the daring frankness of these papers conquered a place for him. A year or two later he was appointed dramatic critic to the Journal des Débats. Indefatigably industrious, he wrote critical essays, dramatic reviews, poems, stories, novels, and plays; and grew constantly in the favor of the public. Six volumes of his critical essays have been collected under the title ‹Les Contemporains› (Men of the Time), and two volumes of dramatic criticism called ‹Impressions de Théâtre.› His method is one of extreme directness and simplicity; he is the most vivacious of censors, and so dexterous and accomplished is his use of the elegant tongue to which he had the good fortune to be born, that his fellow-critics call him the «virtuoso.»

They criticize him, moreover, on the ground that he is inconclusive, having no «absolute shall,» but presenting many points of view, and leaving the reader to form his own conclusions,—a process, as Bagehot says, intensely painful to the multitude. He is accused of inconsistency, of cynicism, and of indifference. To these allegations he replies, in effect, that consistency is the vice of little minds, that the candid observer cannot help taking a judicial interest in both sides, and that in a world of illusions there is danger in finality.

M. Lemaître scored Ohnet without mercy, as the apostle of «smug routine and things allowed»; he arraigned Zola for misconceiving life; and he is unsparing to offenses against literature. His attacks are the more formidable for their very grace and lightness. Yet he is one of the kindest of accusers, and he thus describes his own feeling:—

«To an author who has ever given me this immense pleasure [of sincere and able work] I am ready to pardon much. It is certainly a mark of stupidity to say to a critic who seems to you unduly severe toward a writer whom you love, ‹Attempt his work yourself—and see!› But I could wish that that critic would say it to himself! Of course I acknowledge that authors, on their part, have too often a somewhat unintelligent contempt for critics. I have known a novelist to maintain, with less *esprit* than assurance, that the least of novelists and dramatists is greater than the first of critics and historians; and that, for example, the purveyor to the Petit Journal carries off the prize from M. Taine, who invents no stories. This young man did not know even that there are many kinds of invention. I bear him no ill-will on that account. It enters into the definition of a good critic, to comprehend more things than a young novelist, and to be more indulgent. Thus it is in a spirit of sympathy and charity that we should approach such of our contemporaries as are not wholly beneath criticism. First we should analyze the impression we receive from a book; then try to ‹define› the author, describe his style, show what is permanent, what he seeks from preference, what the world means to him, what are his opinions on life, what the kind and degree of his sensibility,—in fact, how his brain is made! We should try to determine, according to the impression we receive from him, what is the impression he himself received from things. Thus we may arrive at so complete an identification with the author that although his faults cause us pain, real pain, we shall yet see how he allowed himself to fall into them, and how his defects make a part of himself, so that they will appear at first inevitable, and soon better than excusable—amusing.»

ON THE INFLUENCE OF RECENT NORTHERN LITERATURE

From ‹Les Contemporains›

Once more the Saxons and Germans, the Thracians and peoples of snow-covered Thule, have conquered Gaul: an important but not a surprising event.

One of our most pardonable faults is acknowledged to be a certain coquettish yet generous intellectual hospitality. As soon as a Frenchman has succeeded in acquiring not alone national and classical culture, but European culture as well, it is marvelous to see how, at one stroke, he sets himself free from all literary *chauvinism*. At this point the most serious clasp hands, so to speak, with the most frivolous; with the class emancipated from prejudices in favor of clean linen, as well as with those who, to use an expression henceforth symbolical, are « laundered in London.»

It is evident that Renan, for instance, who as a matter of fact understood only superficially contemporary French literature, was always dominated by German science and genius, and placed Goethe, and even Herder, above all that is best among us. Taine also concludes that we have nothing comparable not only to Shakespeare,— we must grant him this,— but to contemporaneous English poets and novelists.

While in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the South—Spain and Italy—attracted us, for the past two centuries we have been captivated by the literature of the North.

This attraction has had its accessions and its intervals; but our last attack of septentriomania shows itself particularly violent and prolonged, for it still endures. It began I think about a dozen years ago, in the revolution against the so-called « naturalist» brutalities and pretensions, and in the taste, now perhaps partially forgotten, for George Eliot.

At this time M. Edmond Schérer and M. Émile Montégut vied with each other in demonstrating in profound and eloquent essays that George Eliot far surpassed all our realistic novelists.

Since then M. de Voguë has magnificently revealed to us Tolstoi and Dostoiewski; and compared with them, again, our poor romancers are but dust in the balance. All the world worshiped the Russian gospel, and set itself to « tolstoiser.» At the same time the « Théâtre Libre » set before us the dramas of Dostoiewski. Finally Ibsen had his turn of apotheosis, and all his later plays were translated. We have seen at the theatres, beside the plays of these two writers, those of the Norwegian Björnson, the German Hauptmann, the Swede Strindberg, and the Belgian Maeterlinck. The fury and intolerance of admiration on the part of young men and certain women for these products of the North is hardly to be imagined. « Yes,» they say, « these polar souls truly speak to our souls; they penetrate them deeply; they stir them to their profoundest depths.» And I read with melancholy this page of M. de Voguë, in the preface of his ‘Russian Romance’:—« There has been created in our day, wider than the preferences of coteries or national prejudice, a European spirit,—a fund of culture, ideas, and tendencies common to all intelligent societies. We find this spirit, the same in essence, the same in impressionability, in London, Petersburg, Rome, and Berlin. But as yet it eludes us; the literature and philosophy of our rivals make conquest of us but slowly: we are not imparting it, we are towed along by it more or less successfully. But to follow is not to guide;—the prevailing ideas which are transforming Europe no longer emanate from the French soul."

Possibly this may be because they issued from that soul fifty years ago!

I must here premise that in speaking of the works of George Eliot, George Sand, and some other authors, it is necessarily from a somewhat remote reading of them, and from impressions immediately following that reading. . . . I shall consider solely on what ground these novelists stand; what are the dominating ideas, the guiding sentiments, what the substratum of their works. . . .

That which strikes us in these romances [of George Eliot], all of them being histories of conscience, is the constant moral preoccupation by which every page is marked, as well as the constant cordial and observant sympathy with the most humble and ordinary phases of human life. To consider, in passing, this second characteristic only: it is indubitably to be found, with a fullness that leaves nothing to be desired, in the works of George Sand. . . . Read 'La Mare au Diable' [The Devil's Pool], 'La Petite Fadette' [Little Fadette], 'François le Champi,' you will find as much robust and charming good-nature, as sincere a liking for simple life and homely details, as much delight and skill in making us feel the essential interest and dignity of a human soul, its environment and social condition, as in the writings of the George beyond the Channel. There is no more, for that I believe to be impossible. . . . Let us pass on to Ibsen. . . . Save in two or three instances, where he seems to defy his own visions, and to jeer at them, the dramas of Ibsen are crises of conscience, histories of revolt, and struggles towards moral enfranchisement. That which he preaches or dreams is the love of truth, the hatred of falsehood. Sometimes it is the reaction of the pagan conception of life against the Christian conception; of the "joy of living," as he terms it, against religious melancholy. It is, beyond and above all else, that which has been called individualism. It is the assertion of the rights of the individual conscience against written laws which do not provide for individual cases; against social conventions often hypocritical, and respecting appearances only. Often too it is the redemption and purification of suffering. It is, in our relations with others, the exercise of individual compassion, the pardon of certain sins which phariseeism never pardons. It is in marriage the perfect union of souls,—a union based only upon the liberty and absolute sincerity of husband and wife, and the entire understanding and appreciation each has of the other. It is, in short, the conformity of life to the ideal—an ideal which Ibsen rarely defines in set terms; in which is to be found something of antique naturalism, something of judicial and haughty evangelicism, of aristocratic dilettantism, and covering all. a film of pessimism.

I can make these definitions no more precise than Ibsen himself does. But it is undeniably into a general sentiment of revolt that the elements of which his «dream» is composed resolve themselves. He is in fact a mighty rebel, a malcontent, at odds with his own genius. Now, in the work of these Northern men, is there not the very substance of the early romances of George Sand? If I name her anew, it is because she had a marvelous gift of receptivity, and because she reflected all the ideas and chimeras of her time. She had already told us, long before these others spoke, that marriage is an oppressive institution if it be not the union of two free wills, and if woman be not treated as a moral being. Already we had heard from her of the conflict of religious and civil law with that other and greater law, not inscribed on Tables of Stone. And already among us the rights of the individual had been declared to be opposed to those of society.

We listened to these sayings as long ago as 1830, and I doubt if even then they were entirely new.

I admit that I have not re-read the eighty volumes of George Sand, but I know their contents, and have been long imbued with their spirit. I open her first romance and I read the protest of Indiana. Indiana is Ibsen's Nora. She flees from Colonel Delmare in the same mood that drives Nora out of Helmer's house. That which Nora goes to seek, Indiana meets. Indiana espousing Ralph in the presence of Nature and of God is Nora after her flight finding the husband of her soul, and choosing him in her freedom. . . .

If Henrik Ibsen is not found complete, as to his ideas, in George Sand, it is in the dramas of Dumas *fils*—preceding, let it be remembered, those of the Norwegian writer — that we shall finally discover him.

The protest of the individual against law, of the moral sentiments of the heart against the moral code and worldly conventionality,— this is the very soul of most of the dramas of M. Dumas. Only, while the revolts of Ibsen are against law and society in general, the insurrections of M. Dumas strike almost always at some particular article of the civil code or of social prejudice. And I do not see that this limitation is necessarily an inferiority. . . .

Let us go on to the Russian novelists, to Tolstoi and to Dostoiewski. M. de Voguë tells us that they are distinguished from our realists by two traits: —

« First, the vague, undefined Russian spirit draws its life from all philosophies and all vagaries. It pauses now in nihilism and pessimism. A superficial reader might sometimes confound Tolstoi and Flaubert. But Tolstoi's nihilism is never accepted without revolt; this spirit is never impenitent; we constantly listen to its groanings and searchings, and it finally redeems and saves itself by love,— love more or less active in Tolstoi and Tourgénief, in Dostoiewski refined and introspective until it becomes a painful passion. Second, equally with sympathy the distinctive characteristic of these realists is the comprehension of that which lies beneath and surrounds life. In them the study of the real is pressed more closely than ever before. They seem imprisoned within its limits, and yet they meditate upon the invisible. Beyond the known, which they describe minutely, they accord a secret study to the unknown, which they suspect. The personages of their creation are disquieted concerning the universal mystery; and no matter how absorbed they may appear in the drama of the moment, they lend an ear to the murmur of abstract ideas — the ideas which people the profound atmosphere where breathe the creations of Tourgénief, Tolstoi, and Dostoiewski.» . . .

« The things lying below life » of which these Russians talk — what is meant by these? Do they concern those obscure and fatal powers of the flesh, those hereditary and physiological instincts that govern us without our knowledge? But this constitutes nearly half of Balzac, and the whole of M. Zola. And « the environment of life »? Does this mean the influences of the domestic surroundings? Who has better known and expressed these than the author of the 'Comédie Humaine,' or the author of 'Madame Bovary'? Or should we accord to these foreigners alone the privilege of knowing how to render «the environment of life»? Should we say that «while the French novelist selects, separates a character or an act from the chaos of beings and actions, to study the isolated subject of his choice, the Russian, dominated by the feeling of universal interdependence, does not sever the thousand ties which attach a man, a deed, a thought, to the total sum of the world, and does not forget that each is constituted by all»?

I recognize and I admire the abounding fullness, almost equaling that of life itself, in that complex romance, 'War and Peace'; but have we not novels corresponding to the complexities of the world, in which the interweaving of moral and material things answers to that of reality, and which also contain in an equal degree the all of life? I say, after due reflection, that all this is true of 'Les Misérables,' and perhaps more profoundly so of 'L'Éducation Sentimentale.' And after all, what is this disquietude of universal mystery, of which the honor of discovery is exclusively ascribed to the Slav novelists? This «mystery» can only be that of our destiny, of our souls, of God, of the origin and end of the universe. But who does not know that nearly all our writers, from 1825 to 1850 especially, professed themselves as disquieted over these things? Of this disquietude Victor Hugo is full; he overflows with it.

If it is said that what is meant is less a philosophical disquiet than a feeling of the formidable unknown which surrounds us, a feeling which is perhaps evoked by some accidental sensation, I answer that I quite understand that there are moments when this thought alone — that one is in the world, and that the world exists, appears utterly incomprehensible and strikes us dumb. But in the first place, this astonishment at living, this sort of «sacred horror,» is inconsistent in its very nature with any expression at all except the briefest, and can be prolonged only by repeating itself. In the second place, we had assuredly experienced this mysterious shudder before we ever opened a Russian or Norwegian book. Tolstoi's phrase «The eternal silence of infinite space affrights me,» is one which does not date from yesterday. . . .

If, then, all that we admire in the recent writers of the North was already ours, how does it happen that, visible in them, it appears to so many of us new and original? Is it because these writers are greater artists than ours, their literary form superior to that of our poets and novelists? The question seems to me insoluble: for he alone could discern the exact value of literary form who should comprehend all the languages of Europe as profoundly as he comprehends his own; that is, sufficiently to perceive in its most delicate shades that which constitutes the style of each writer. This, I imagine, can never be; for I find that the most learned and accomplished of foreign linguists never arrive at the power of feeling as we do the phrase of a Flaubert or a Renan. The incapacity is made evident by their classification of our authors, where they put together without discrimination the great and the inferior. In the same way the style of foreign writers must always to a great extent escape us. I am inclined to believe that a man may know several languages well, but only one profoundly. It is certain that neither Eliot, nor Ibsen, nor Tolstoi will ever afford to us that kind or degree of pleasure which is aroused in us by the literary form of our own great authors. . . .

Norway has interminable winters almost without day, alternating with short and violent summers almost without night:—marvelous conditions either for the slow and patient working out of one's inner visions, or for the sudden and overpowering impulses of passion.

London, compared with which Paris is but a pretty little town, is the capital of effort and will; and an English fog seems to me an excellent atmosphere for reflection. I have never seen a steppe; but to picture it to the eye of the mind, I multiply in my imagination the melancholy stretches of heath, the pools and woods of Sologne in winter.

To understand their literature we must add to these physical characteristics the Past of Norway, England, and Russia; their traditions, their public and private manners, their religions, and the furrows traced by them all in the Norwegian, English, and Russian brain.

Briefly, it may be said that the writers of the North return to us (and this is the secret of their charm) the substance of our own literature of forty or fifty years ago, modified, renewed, and enriched by its passage through minds notably different from our own. In rethinking our thoughts, they rediscover them for us.

They have, it seems to me, less art than we, less knowledge of the rules of composition. Such works as 'Middlemarch' are discouraging by their prolixity. Eight days of constant reading are necessary for 'War and Peace'; and such dimensions are in themselves inartistic. . . .

Furthermore, I am by no means persuaded that these writers have more emotion than ours: certainly they have no more general ideas. But they have to a greater degree than we the perception of the inner religious life.

More patient than we; not perhaps more penetrating, but capable of greater persistence, if I may so say, in meditation and observation; more able than we to dispense with diversions,—they address themselves to readers who have less need than we of being amused. The long and monotonous conversations of Ibsen, his indefatigable accumulation of familiar details, at first overwhelm us, but little by little envelop us, and form around each of his dramas an atmosphere peculiar to itself, by which the appearance of truth in the characters is greatly augmented. We see them living their slow mysterious lives. They are intensely serious: and they exhibit this peculiarity,—that all the incidents of their existence stir their soul's depths, and reveal these depths to us; that their domestic dramas become dramas of conscience in which their whole spiritual life is involved. A woman who finds that her husband does not understand her, or that her son is attacked by an incurable malady, instantly asks herself if Martin Luther was not too conservative, whether paganism or Christianity is really right, and if all our laws do not rest upon falsehood and hypocrisy.

Perhaps the author forgets that these questions, absorbing when discussed by a great philosopher or poet, can be solved only in commonplace fashion by narrow townspeople and well-meaning clergymen. Perhaps too he surfeits us with the restless metaphysics of ordinary humanity, and its tendency to philosophize. But as it is really his own thought that he thus translates, it is possible after all to take in it a true and lively interest.

One dominating idea in the romances of George Eliot is the idea of responsibility, accepted in its most rigid sense: the idea that no act is indifferent or inoffensive; that all have infinite consequences, and reverberations either within or without our own souls, and that thus we are always more responsible, or responsible for more, than we realize. The consequence of this idea is a moral surveillance constantly exercised by her characters over themselves, or by the author over her characters. Most of them hold the idea of sin, and of an inner life at least as fully developed as the life of their social relations. They make frequent examinations of conscience; they repent, they improve. Certainly all this is more rare in our romances, doubtless because it is more rare in our conduct. I have noticed, on the other hand, that George Sand's heroes almost never repent. If Mauprat advances in goodness, it is in virtue of his love for Edmée, and not as the result of probing for his sins. Others learn the lessons of events, and grow better through experience. The nobler characters of Sand and Hugo dwell more upon the happiness of humanity than upon their own moral perfection. I grant at once that they are inconsequent persons, apt to begin at the wrong end of things, and that their gospel is often a gospel of revolution. . . .

I must of course admit that the realism of these foreigners is more chaste than ours has been. The deeds of the flesh hold small place in their works, for which I willingly praise them. I observe, however, that if the actual state of things in France is less unblushing than it is made to appear in some of our realistic novels, it is surely, throughout Europe, less refined than English and Russian romances would lead us to believe. We are more frank in these matters. I do not know that this is a mark of superiority; but our realism, more sensual perhaps, is also more disenchanting. Northern writers surely do not recoil from depicting the suffering, cruelty, and squalor of human life; but it cannot be denied that they diminish their own power by avoiding a certain class of infamies. They do not tell the whole truth. You will never find in them such pages as certain of those of Flaubert or Maupassant. They are well able to show us the world as infinitely sad and pitiful; but hesitate to exhibit it as simply disgusting, which nevertheless it often is. Their pessimism is never as radical as they pretend.

This prudishness, this reserve, this incurable scrupulousness is explained by that religious spirit with which they are still impregnated; and thus we arrive at this truism, that the differences of literatures are rooted in the fundamental differences of race.

The books of Ibsen and Eliot remain, in spite of the intellectual emancipation of these writers, Protestant books. For to abandon, after unrestricted examination, as Eliot and Ibsen have done, a religion of which unrestricted examination is an inherent attribute, is not, properly speaking, to abandon at all. Only that can be really thrown off which is really a yoke: insurrection is only veritably made against a religion which interdicts freedom of spirit. In the other religions one may remain by expanding them. It is only where prohibition is radical that schism can be absolute. That which Protestant liberty forbids is not intellectual enfranchisement, but if I may say so, enfranchisement of language and manner. Among Protestant peoples, where the faithful soul depends only upon his conscience, and allows no intermediary between himself and God, the universal habits of thought and discussion which result, cause a mingling of religious sentiment and anxiety in all their literature,—even profane,—and unbelievers retain at least the manner and tone of believers. On the contrary, among us emancipated Catholics—or even practicing Catholics whom sacramental confession absolves in part from the care of administering our own conscience—there is a religious or rather ecclesiastical literature with which we are but little acquainted, and a literature entirely profane and laic; each one playing its own part. To certain reflections on the inner nature of souls, certain bits of moral casuistry, certain effusions of religious sentiment, which strike us in Eliot and Ibsen, we could find analogous examples only in the works of priests and monks, whom we ignore, or in Bossuet, Lacordaire, or Veuillot, where it does not occur to us to look for them. Our two literatures do not mingle, and thereby the secular loses something of moral depth. . . .

Finally, we see in what measure these foreigners have been of service to us. We have welcomed their idealism through weariness or disgust with naturalism. It is true that they have led us to put more exactness and sincerity into the expression of ideas and sentiments which were formerly familiar to us; to give precision to our romanticism, and at the same time to moderate our realism.

But once again, if we have heartily and readily accepted this foreign literature, is it not proved that in reality we possess, if not the cosmopolitan spirit, at least the cosmopolitan manners? An Englishman travels over the whole world, and remains everywhere an Englishman. We do not quit our own firesides; but from this corner we adapt ourselves without difficulty to the moods and manner of thought of all nations, even the most remote. Yes! ours are the writers whom I term the true cosmopolitans; for a cosmopolitan — that is to say, a European — literature should be common and intelligible to all the people of Europe, and can only become cosmopolitan by the order, symmetry, and lucidity which have for centuries been accepted as our national qualities. They are so still; as is proved by the large human sympathy which we are to-day supposing that we discover among foreigners, but which nevertheless has always been one of our most eminent characteristics. We love to approve; ours is perhaps the only nation disposed to prefer others to itself. But this very enthusiasm with which we have fostered and extolled the tender humanity of the Russian romance and the Norwegian drama — does it not prove that we ourselves possess the same quality, and that in them we have only *recognized* it? . . .

These exchanges — this give-and-take of ideas between nations — have existed in all times, more especially since the closeness of commercial relations has involved that of intellectual relations as well. At times we have borrowed from other peoples, and have impressed upon that which we took a European character. Such are the appropriations of Corneille or Le Sage from the Spaniards. At times, and oftener, being inquisitive and kindly, we have taken from them unconsciously that which we ourselves had previously loaned them. Thus, in the eighteenth century we discovered the novels of Richardson, who had imitated Marivaux. Thus we have found again in Lessing that which was in Diderot, and in Goethe much that was in Jean Jacques; and we have believed that we owed to the Germans and English the romanticism which we ourselves had originated. For is not romanticism more than mediæval decoration, or in the drama more than the suppression of the three unities, or the mingling of tragedy and comedy? It is the feeling for nature, the recognition of the rights of passion; it is the spirit of revolt, the exaltation of the individual: all, things of which the germs and more than the germs were in the 'Nouvelle Héloise,' in the 'Confessions,' and in the 'Lettres de la Montagne.'

In this constant circulation of ideas, we are less and less certain to whom they belong. Each nation imposes upon them its own character, and each of the characters seems necessarily the most original and the best.

It is only of the present moment that I write, and who knows how fleeting that may be? This restless septentriomania — how long will it endure? Does it not already begin to languish? And as to the rest,—to come to the regulating of this debit and credit account opened between races, does it not remain to be seen whether the pietism of George Eliot, the contradictory and rebellious idealism of Ibsen, the mystic fatalism of Tolstoi, are necessarily superior to the humanitarianism or the realism of French authors? Who can affirm that the ardor of our scientific faith and revolutionizing charity, moderately subjective as they are and inclined rather to social reform, do not compensate in the sight of God for the greater aptitude of the Northern races for meditation and subjective perfection? Who will swear that largely and humanly understood, the positive philosophy, to call it by its name,—the philosophy of Taine, that which is held to be responsible for the brutalities and aridities of naturalistic literature,—does not represent a more advanced moment in human development than Protestant and septentrional religiosity? Do not books like those of J. H. Rosny, to cite no others, presage the reconciliation of two sorts of intelligence which among us have been too often separated? And do we not recognize in them both the enthusiasm for science and the enthusiasm for moral beauty, and see already how these two religions accord and become fruitful? Who lives shall see! Meantime, make haste to enjoy these writers from regions of snows and fogs; enjoy them while they are in favor, while they are believed in, and while they can still influence you,—as it is best to avail one's self of the methods in vogue, so long as they can cure.

For it may be that a reaction of the Latin spirit is at hand.

Translated for ‘A Library of the World's Best Literature.’

LEOPARDI

GIACOMO LEOPARDI

(1798–1837)

BY KATHARINE HILLARD

Like Byron, Leopardi came of an ancient and patrician but impoverished family. His mother, who seems to have been the real head of the house, had so absorbed herself in the task of repairing its fallen fortunes, that she had little time and less tenderness left to lavish upon her children. His father, Count Monaldo Leopardi, was a mere figure-head in his own household, and spent most of his time shut up in his library. He lived at Recanati, a little mountain village of Tuscany, high up in the Apennines, near Loreto; and there, in the stifling dullness of a small provincial town, Giacomo Leopardi was born, on the 29th of June, 1798. His father was as conservative as an ordinary mind bred up under the restraints of a little village in the Italy of that day naturally would be. He was bigoted, narrow-minded, bitterly opposed to progress, seeing nothing good outside of the precincts of the Church. He even preferred the costume of an earlier period, and dressed himself and his wife in mediæval attire. The young Leopardi, nervous, sickly, and deformed, was brought up in his father's library, having no companions except his sister and his brothers. He spent his time among dictionaries and grammars; and with little or no assistance contrived to make himself master of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Spanish, and English, by the time he was sixteen.

At that age he composed a Latin treatise on the Roman rhetoricians of the second century, a history of astronomy, and a Latin translation and comment on Plotinus, of which Sainte-Beuve said that «one who had studied Plotinus his whole life could find something useful in this work of a boy.» At seventeen he wrote on the popular errors of the ancients, and quoted more than four hundred authors. His next achievement was two odes in the manner of Anacreon, which imposed upon the first scholars in Italy. At eighteen he wrote a long poem called ‹The Approach of Death,› which was lost for many years, but finally discovered and published. It is a vision of the omnipotence of death, that offers a remarkable resemblance in many ways to Shelley's ‹Triumph of Life,› written six years later. Then in 1819, when the young poet was but twenty years old, came the two poems which gave him his place among the Italian classics:

the 'Ode to Italy,' and that to the Dante monument then being erected in Florence.

These poems were so full of the spirit of the hour, and gave such complete expression to the anguish of a country awakened from the sleep of centuries to find herself among the despised and rejected nations of the world,—her political prestige gone, her intellectual standing lost, even her poetry and her art sunk into the lowest depths of degradation,—that they fired the Italian people like a voice from their glorious past. Leopardi had emerged from the seclusion of his father's library a perfect Greek in spirit and in style; and only Landor could compare with him for classic purity, precision, and force. The rich harmonies of the Italian language lent to his poetry a charm that no English translation can possibly give, and the unrhymed lines fall cold and dead upon the ear in our less musical tongue.

The revolutionary spirit of these odes and the bitter disappointment that they breathed made the bigoted and narrow-minded father furious, and he denied his son almost the necessaries of life. Because the poet refused to become a priest, he was loaded with labors that his frail health was not able to support; nor would the father allow him to leave Recanati, where *ennui*, to use Leopardi's own words, not merely oppressed and wearied him, but agonized and lacerated like a cruel pain. He had suffered there a disappointment in love; having cherished a romantic passion for a young girl whom he scarcely knew, but whose voice he heard continually as she sang at her work in a house opposite his father's palace. Probably had he known her better he might have loved her less; but the count promptly crushed the dawning passion, and shortly afterwards the young girl died. Her memory represented for the poet all that he ever knew of love.

At the age of twenty-four he broke away at last from his paternal prison-house and went to Rome; only to carry his melancholy with him, his morbid contempt for his fellows, his physical weakness and sufferings. Rome proved to him only a larger Recanati, where frivolity and dissipation reigned supreme. A few foreigners, principally Germans, and among them Niebuhr, alone redeemed the social degradation. Niebuhr, who considered Leopardi by far the first, if not the only, Greek philologist in Italy, would have procured him a professorship of Greek philosophy in Berlin; but Leopardi would not leave his own country. For some years he drifted about rather aimlessly, always the prey of ill health, from Rome to Milan, to Bologna, to Recanati again, to Pisa, and to Florence. Many men loved him; notably Antonio Ranieri, a young Neapolitan whose acquaintance Leopardi made in 1832, and at whose house at Capodimonte, carefully tended by Ranieri and his sister, the poet spent the last years of his unhappy life. Here he met the German Platen, and wrote one of his finest poems, ‘La Ginestra’ (The Broom-flower). It was at Naples also that Leopardi wrote a satire in *ottava rima* upon the abortive Neapolitan revolution of 1820; a poem clever in its way, but like much of the verse of Giusti, too full of local allusions to be comprehensible except by the Neapolitans of the early thirties. After four years of hopeless invalidism, Leopardi died very suddenly, on the eve of departure for the country, on June 15th, 1837. His remains were deposited at a little church on the road to Pozzuoli.

That genial critic, De Sanctis, tells us that «love, inexhaustible and almost ideal, was the supreme craving of Leopardi's heart, and never left it through life»; and that «it may in truth be said that pain and love form the twofold poetry of his existence.» Except for the society of his commonplace brothers and sisters he was absolutely without companionship until he went to Rome. The pettiness of its social ambitions swept away his last illusion. To quote De Sanctis again: «The objects of our desire he called idols; our labors, idleness; and everything, vanity. . . . Inertia—rust, as it were—even more than pain consumed his life, alone in what he called ‘this formidable desert of the world.’» Like most pessimists, he demanded everything and gave nothing. He desired the love of mankind, but he hated and despised his fellows; and insisted upon what they owed him, forgetting his debt to them. Like another Prometheus, Leopardi lay bound to the rock of suffering, with a vulture gnawing at his heart; but the vulture was of his own nurture, and his tortures were self-imposed. It is to his praise however as a patriot, that his voice was one of the first to arouse Italy from her shameful sleep to the desire of better things. As a poet the beautiful purity of his style, and the exquisite melody of his unrhymed or irregularly rhymed verse, have never been surpassed.

Opinions differ as to the crowning expression of his genius; but the popular verdict seems to settle upon ‘Sylvia,’ and the noble poem ‘La Ginestra,’ or the Broom-flower. The lyric beauty of ‘Sylvia’ can never be rendered in English irregular verse: it belongs to the Italian language. The ‘Night-Song of a Wandering Shepherd of Asia’ is one of the most charming of his longer poems; though it may be considered doubtful whether any wandering shepherd ever felt that the crowning happiness of his flocks was their incapacity for feeling bored. Other fine poems of Leopardi are ‘Aspasia,’ ‘The Song-Sparrow,’ ‘Bento Minore,’ and ‘The Dominant Thought.’

Katharine Hillard

SYLVIA

SYLVIA, canst thou still remember
That time in thy brief existence
When a beauty all-resplendent
Shone from thine eyes, with their fleeting, smiling glances,
What time, pensive yet gay, thou wert crossing
The boundaries of thy youth?
Resounded all thy quiet
Dwelling, and the lanes around it,
With the music of thy singing,
As intent on the tasks of women
Thou wert pond'ring, lost in contentment,
All the vague future fancy held before thee.
It was May, the month of fragrance; and thus ever
Didst thou dream out the hours.
And I, my fairest studies
At times forsaking, and the well-thumbed volumes
Over whose weary pages
I spent myself, and the best part of my youth,
Leaned from the terrace of my father's dwelling,
To listen to the music of thy voice;
And to watch thy busy fingers
As they flew o'er the tiresome sewing.
While I gazed on the placid heavens,
The golden lanes and the gardens,
And there the far-off sea, and here the mountains,—
No mortal tongue could utter
The feelings that rose in me.
O Sylvia mine, what visions,
What hopes, what hearts, were ours!
Under what beautiful seeming
Lay human life and fate!
When I remember those fancies,
I am seized by a mortal sorrow,
Bitter, devoid of comfort,
And I return to grieve over all my misfortune.
O Nature, O Mother Nature,
Why dost thou never give us
That we were promised at first? Alas, why so often
Dost thou deceive thy children?
Thee, ere the grass had faded with winter,
Insidious death had vanquished;
Thy tender beauty perished. And never saw'st thou

The flower of thy maiden years.
Thy heart was never melted
Or by the praises of thy raven tresses,
Or of thy loving glances, swift and bashful.
Nor at their feast-days with thy young companions,
Could'st thou discourse of love.
And shortly also perished
The sweet hope that treasured; even youth itself
The cruel fates denied me.
Alas, alas! how utterly has vanished
The dear companion of my early years,
The hope I mourn forever!
Is this the world we pictured? Can these be
The dear delights, the love, the deeds, the events,
That long ago we talked about so fondly?
Is this the destiny of all mankind?
When the truth dawned upon thee,
Poor child, thou sank'st before it; thy cold hand pointing
To where the naked tomb and pallid Death
Waited me from afar.

Translation of Katharine Hillard.

NIGHT-SONG

OF A WANDERING ASIAN SHEPHERD

WHAT dost thou, moon in heaven; tell me, what dost thou,
O silent moon?
Rising with evening, and slowly pacing
The skies, contemplating the desert; then setting.
Oh, art thou not yet weary
Of still retracing the everlasting pathways?
Art thou not yet rebellious? dost still delight
In gazing at these valleys?
Like thy life
The shepherd's life, methinks.
With earliest dawn he rises,
Drives his flock far afield, and watches
The flock, the brooks, the pastures;
Then wearied out, lies down to rest at evening.
Nor to aught else aspires.
Tell me, O moon, what value
Such a life to the shepherd,

Such a life, moon, to thee? tell me where leadeth
This brief existence of mine,
And thy eternal journeys?
An old man hoary and delicate,
Half clad, and going barefoot,
Bearing a heavy burden upon his shoulders,—
Over mountains and over valleys,
Over sharp rocks, deep sands, and thorny places,
In wind, in tempest, or when the lightning
Flashes, or the hailstones strike him,—
Still hurries on, hurries on panting,
Traverses torrents and marshes,
Falls and rises again, and faster and faster hastens;
Without or rest or refreshment,
Torn and bleeding he goes: and at last arriveth
There where the pathway
And his struggles alike have ending;
Where yawns the abyss, bottomless, terrible,—
There he flings himself down, and findeth oblivion.
Such, O virgin moon,
Such is mortal existence.

. . . .

Often, thus gazing upon thee,
Standing so silent above these, the desert regions,
Whereto with distant arch the heavens confine thee,
Or as my flock I follow,
Step by step, as we travel slowly together,
And when I gaze at the stars, that above me are burning,—
I say to myself, as I'm thinking,
Why all these starry fires?
What means this infinite air, and what the
Depths of the heavens? What is the meaning
Of all this solitude boundless? And I, what am I?
Thus I discourse with myself, and of all my surroundings,
Sky and earth, endless and splendid,
With all their offspring unnumbered;
Of all their relations and movements,
Of all things celestial, terrestrial,
Sweeping on still, without resting,
Ever returning to fill their places appointed.
Of all things, no purpose,
No real fruit can I see.
But thou at least, maiden immortal, thou
Knowest all things.

This thing I know, and I feel it:
That out of this endless motion,
Out of this frail human nature,
Some slight good and contentment
Others may get, perchance; to me our life is but evil.
O flock of mine, at rest here! O happy creatures,
That know not your fate, I believe you unconscious of sorrow!
What envy to you I bear!
Not only that even of suff'ring
Almost unheeding ye go,—
That hunger or terror
Seizing upon you, is ever as swiftly forgotten,—
But still more because tedium never o'ertakes you.
And when ye rest in the shade on sweet grasses,
Content and quiet bide with you.

. . . .

Had I wings like a bird, peradventure,
To bear me on high through the heavens,
And one by one to number the planets,
Or, like the thunder, leap from one peak to another,
Happier I'd be, sweet my flock,
Happier I'd be, fairest moon.
Perchance, though, my wandering fancy
Strays from the truth, in dreaming of fortunes not mine.
Perchance in every fate, in every form,
Whether within the cradle or the fold,
To all the fatal day is that of birth.

Translation of Katharine Hillard.

ALAIN RENÉ LE SAGE

(1668–1747)

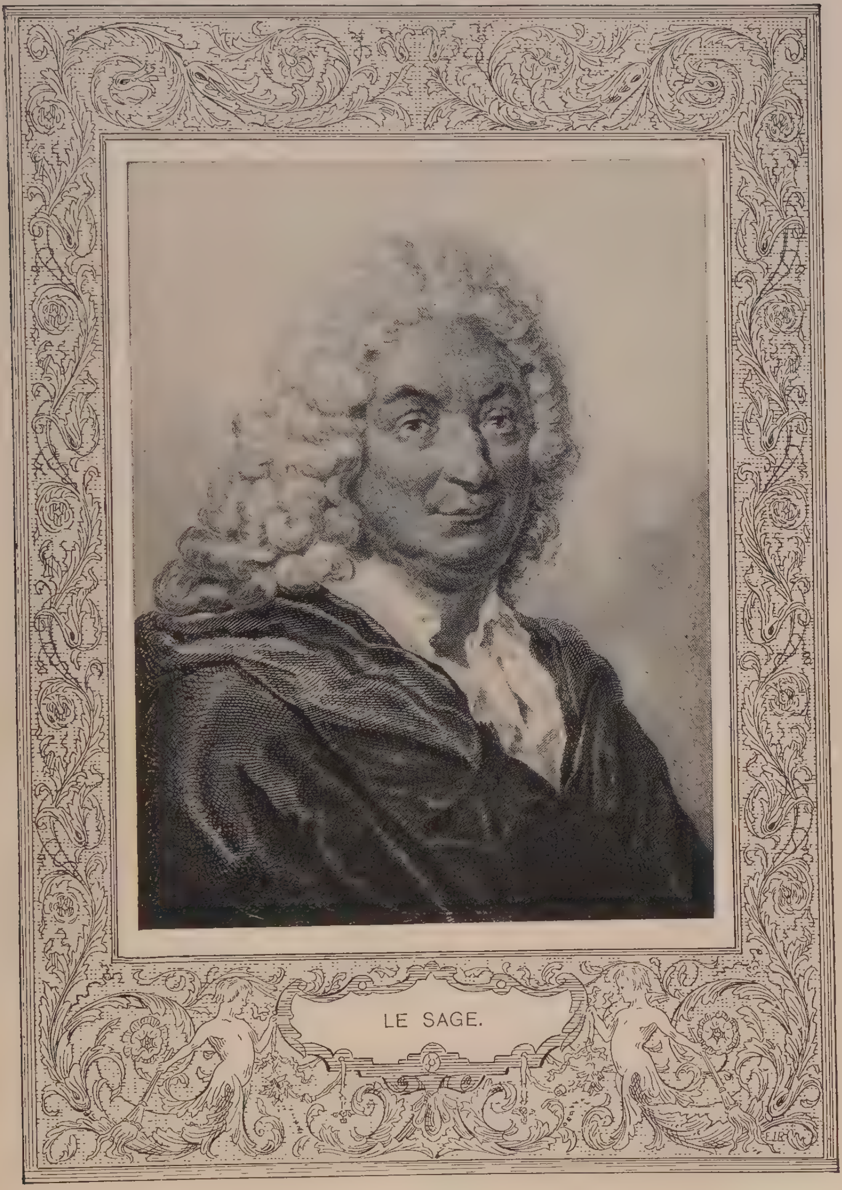
BY JANE GROSVENOR COOKE

In France the seventeenth century was a time of dreams. Imagination reveled in the grotesque and fantastic, and craved the exuberant sentiment, the ideal emotion, expressed in the romances of d'Urfé and Madame de La Fayette. Toward the end of the century this mood was followed by reaction. People stopped dreaming to study the real life before their eyes; and literature reflected the change. The first great realist in fiction was Alain Le Sage.

Le Sage was a sturdy, self-willed Breton, with keen interest in human affairs, and more than usual skill in drawing conclusions from them. He was an optimist, taught by experience to distrust men's motives. Left an orphan at fourteen, under guardianship of an uncle who squandered his small patrimony, he accepted poverty with characteristic cheerfulness. His seems to have been a sensible, controlled nature, with slight inclination towards irregular ways. At twenty-six he married a pretty girl of the *bourgeoisie*, went to writing, and was the first Frenchman to earn a living by authorship.

Unlike the authors who preceded him, this honest bourgeois had no powerful patronage to insure his success. He knew little of court and salon, depended on his own exertions, and hence experienced many disappointments before he found his place. His need of money forced him to inferior production, and much of his work is now valueless.

He had studied law; but Antoine Danchet — a successful young dramatist, and his chum and fellow-student of the Quartier Latin — urged him to write. Undoubtedly he liked the suggestion, although his was no evident vocation nor immediate success. His early attempts were pot-boilers, efforts toward self-discovery; and the first — a translation from the Greek, ‹Letters of Aristænetus› — a failure. But he was warmly encouraged by the Abbé de Lyonne, — eccentric drinker of twenty-two daily pints of Seine water, and probable original of the Sangrado of ‹Gil Blas.› He took Le Sage under his protection; made his perseverance in authorship possible by bestowing upon him a pension of six hundred livres; and is said to have interested



LE SAGE.

him in Spanish literature, to which he may also have been attracted by the fact that his wife's mother was a Spaniard. For years he groped on, translating Spanish plays and stories,—unoriginal plodder.

Le Sage was curiously unambitious. His aspirations never seem to have been of a highly emotional order, and he had no kinship with the exalted sentiment of French classic drama and romance. Sainte-Beuve calls him a man without any ideality; but it is truer to define his ideal as the rule of good sense. He scorned to affect emotion which he ignored, and was quick to detect and expose social hypocrisies. Kindly in spite of many disillusions, he is the genius of the commonplace; picturing with humorous satire and dramatic force the actuating sentiments of ordinary men and women.

He required the stimulus of outside suggestion; and like Shakespeare, loved to transform a ready-made tale. The plot and scene remain Spanish, like the originals from which he borrowed; the atmosphere and characterization are French.

When nearly forty he won his first brilliant success with two dramas,—'Crispin Rival de son Maître,' and 'Don César Ursin,'—which were played upon one occasion at the Théâtre Français. The first was a lively improbable one-act *lever de rideau*, in which a valet in masquerade courts his master's daughter. The audience applauded it enthusiastically, but were indifferent to the longer play. Oddly enough, the situation was reversed at Versailles, where Don César succeeded and the *lever de rideau* failed. The Parisians had shown the keener judgment, for 'Crispin' has become a classic.

'Turcaret,' his one great drama, was refused by the Théâtre Français under its first title, 'Les Étrennes'; but when remodeled introduced a daring innovation in stage tradition. Turcaret, shrewd and unscrupulous, has made money as a government contractor and come to Paris to enjoy it, ordering his countrified wife to remain at home. He falls in love with a baroness, who flatters and fleeces him and promptly bestows his gifts upon a younger lover. The valets and grisettes flatter their master's foibles, pilfer when they can, and better their condition by all clever knavery. The keen exposure of human pettiness ends in the discomfiture of the vulgar hero. His low-bred wife claims him at an evening reception; his coarse-grained sister comes to sell finery to the baroness; he is swindled out of his ill-gotten wealth and bundled off to prison. In the period of the Spanish war, this typical portrayal of a class whose unscrupulous dealings stirred up wrath and fear was even more daring than the realism of Le Sage's great predecessor, Molière. For a time the play was in danger of suppression, which it only escaped through the intervention of royal authority. Even then the ridiculed class reviled it hotly, hired men to hiss it down, and offered the author large bribes for its withdrawal: an opposition which only determined Le Sage to continue it.

In spite of this success, he did not go on producing regular drama, but devoted himself to the more profitable work of writing little plays and operettas to be acted out of doors at the fairs of Paris. These *pièces de la foire*, given in booths set up along the streets, attracted a humbler audience, which received his satire more cordially and offered him more certain recompense than the regular theatres. In one of these plays he introduced a woman doctor; and the idea of such an anomaly was greatly enjoyed as an impossible burlesque.

His first noteworthy story, ‘Le Diable Boiteux,’—founded on the Spanish ‘Diablo Cojuelo’ of Guevara, to whom it was dedicated,—appeared in 1707, and was the most immediately popular of Le Sage's works. The spirit, liberated from a bottle in a magician's laboratory, entertains his rescuer with the secret sights of a great city at night; and unroofing the buildings, explains the sufferings, transports, and agitations revealed. On this thread of story is strung a succession of vivid satiric little dramas. Often compared with ‘Les Caractères’ of La Bruyère in general idea, ‘Le Diable’ has greater continuity; for while the former is a series of detached sketches, the latter continually recalls the interest to a central plot.

English readers know Le Sage best from his great novel, ‘Gil Blas,’ over which he worked for more than twenty years. After a long and bitter controversy as to his indebtedness to Spanish literature, the idea of a romance of which ‘Gil Blas’ is a translation was disproved. The central idea is Spanish, as often in his work; the development his own.

Le Sage had no exalted opinion of reason as a controlling power; but regarded a human being as an impressionable mass, capable of recording and of being transformed by sensation. Gil Blas, the young Spaniard who starts out to seek his fortune, is not remarkable for vice or virtue. He is a shrewd, good-hearted youth, easily influenced by his surroundings. But the power of good is impressed upon him without conscious moralizing; and in middle life, after many follies and mistakes, he becomes a staid, trustworthy citizen. He tells the story of his adventures with witty candor and good-humor. He is a shifty politic fellow, «with a racquet for every ball.» When he hears of a relative whom he had never met—«Yet nature will prevail: as soon as I had heard that he was in a fair way, I was tempted to call upon him.» While a valet, Gil Blas finds it necessary to leave his place at short notice. «I made a bundle of my own goods, incidentally slipping in some odd articles belonging to my master.» He is a knave certainly, but never a serious villain. Society, he finds, is composed of people who live by their wits, and who think a great deal about good things to eat and drink. So he scrambles with the others. In the four volumes of Gil Blas's adventures, with the long digressions about his acquaintances, there is no more plot than in a man's life. There is no preaching. Yet the effect is of unity, and the tale as «moral as experience itself.»

The distinctive quality of Le Sage is unprejudiced exposition. «My purpose was to represent human life historically as it exists,» he says in the preface to Gil Blas. «God forbid I should hold myself out as a portrait-painter.» Nevertheless he is a portrait-painter, seizing the outward visible fact with little psychological effort. His is the hearty spontaneity of the simple story-teller.

In spite of his love of Spanish models, Le Sage breaks away from the popular picaresque literature,—sensational tales recording the success of low-born, witty rogues. He represents plenty of knavery; but after all, Gil Blas finds honesty the best policy.

The work of Le Sage marks the transition from the spirit of the seventeenth to that of the eighteenth century. In his large and general view of life, of society *en masse*, and in his taste for foreign literature, he belongs to the seventeenth century. But his realism is more modern; and in his lack of conscious moral motive, and in his fatalistic acceptance of the conditions of human life, a grain of Voltairean unbelief is already germinating.

Curiously enough, Le Sage exercised more influence abroad than at home. Before his fellow-countrymen had learned to appreciate him, Smollett had translated Gil Blas into English; and it had become the model after which Fielding and his contemporaries sought to shape the English novel.

The great charm of Le Sage lies in the strong and rapid style of his witty narration. Occasionally he shows an appreciation of nature, but his interest in life is almost wholly social. Whatever he has to say is expressed with characteristic grace and strength. The words are so ready and so apt, the phrase so just yet easy, the whole effect so animated, that in his instinctive pleasure the reader hardly realizes the great literary skill which created this masterpiece of precise and vigorous French.

Jane Grosvenor Cooke.

GIL BLAS ENTERS THE SERVICE OF DR. SANGRADO

From ‹Gil Blas›

I determined to throw myself in the way of Sigñor Arias de Londona, and to look out for a new berth in his register; but as I was on my way to No Thoroughfare, who should come across me but Doctor Sangrado, whom I had not seen since the day of my master's death. I took the liberty of touching my hat. He kenned me in a twinkling, though I had changed my dress; and with as much warmth as his temperament would allow him, «Heyday!» said he, «the very lad I wanted to see; you have never been out of my thought. I have occasion for a clever fellow about me, and pitched upon you as the very thing, if you can read and write.» «Sir,» replied I, «if that is all you require, I am your man.» «In that case,» rejoined he, «we need look no further. Come home with me: it will be all comfort; I shall behave to you like a brother. You will have no wages, but everything will be found you. You shall eat and drink according to the true faith, and be taught to cure all diseases. In a word, you shall rather be my young Sangrado than my footman.»

I closed in with the doctor's proposal, in the hope of becoming an Esculapius under so inspired a master. He carried me home on the spur of the occasion, to install me in my honorable employment; which honorable employment consisted in writing down the name and residence of the patients who sent for him in his absence.. There had indeed been a register for this purpose, kept by an old domestic; but she had not the gift of spelling accurately, and wrote a most perplexing hand. This account I was to keep. It might truly be called a bill of mortality; for my members all went from bad to worse during the short time they continued in this system. I was a sort of bookkeeper for the other world, to take places in the stage, and to see that the first come were the first served. My pen was always in my hand, for Doctor Sangrado had more practice than any physician of his time in Valladolid. He had got into reputation with the public by a certain professional slang, humored by a medical face, and some extraordinary cases more honored by implicit faith than scrupulous investigation.

He was in no want of patients, nor consequently of property. He did not keep the best house in the world: we lived with some little attention to economy. The usual bill of fare consisted of peas, beans, boiled apples or cheese. He considered this food as best suited to the human stomach; that is to say, as most amenable to the grinders, whence it was to encounter the process of digestion. Nevertheless, easy as was their passage, he was not for stopping the way with too much of them; and to be sure, he was in the right. But though he cautioned the maid and me against repletion in respect of solids, it was made up by free permission to drink as much water as we liked. Far from prescribing us any limits in that direction, he would tell us sometimes: "Drink, my children: health consists in the pliability and moisture of the parts. Drink water by pailfuls: it is a universal dissolvent; water liquefies all the salts. Is the course of the blood a little sluggish? this grand principle sets it forward: too rapid? its career is checked." Our doctor was so orthodox on this head that though advanced in years, he drank nothing himself but water. He defined old age to be a natural consumption which dries us up and wastes us away: on this principle he deplored the ignorance of those who call wine "old men's milk." He maintained that wine wears them out and corrodes them; and pleaded with all the force of his eloquence against that liquor, fatal in common both to the young and old,—that friend with a serpent in its bosom,—that pleasure with a dagger under its girdle.

In spite of these fine arguments, at the end of a week a looseness ensued, with some twinges, which I was blasphemous enough to saddle on the universal dissolvent and the new-fangled diet. I stated my symptoms to my master, in the hope that he would relax the rigor of his regimen and qualify my meals with a little wine; but his hostility to that liquor was inflexible. "If you have not philosophy enough," said he, "for pure water, there are innocent infusions to strengthen the stomach against the nausea of aqueous quaffings. Sage, for example, has a very pretty flavor; and if you wish to heighten it into a debauch, it is only mixing rosemary, wild poppy, and other simples with it,—but no compounds."

In vain did he crack off his water, and teach me the secret of composing delicious messes. I was so abstemious that, remarking my moderation, he said:—"In good sooth, Gil Blas, I marvel not that you are no better than you are: you do not drink enough, my friend. Water taken in a small quantity serves only to separate the particles of bile and set them in action; but our practice is to drown them in a copious drench. Fear not, my good lad, lest a superabundance of liquid should either weaken or chill your stomach; far from thy better judgment be that silly fear of unadulterated drink. I will insure you against all consequences; and if my authority will not serve your turn, read Celsus. That oracle of the ancients makes an admirable panegyric on water; in short, he says in plain terms that those who plead an inconstant stomach in favor of wine, publish a libel on their own viscera, and make their constitution a pretense for their sensuality."

As it would have been ungenteel in me to run riot on my entrance into the career of practice, I affected thorough conviction; indeed I thought there was something in it. I therefore went on drinking water on the authority of Celsus, or to speak in scientific terms, I began to drown the bile in copious drenches of that unadulterated liquor; and though I felt myself more out of order from day to day, prejudice won the cause against experience. It is evident therefore that I was in the right road to the practice of physic. Yet I could not always be insensible to the qualms which increased in my frame, to that degree as to determine me on quitting Doctor Sangrado. But he invested me with a new office which changed my tone. "Hark you, my child," said he to me one day: "I am not one of those hard and ungrateful masters, who leave their household to grow gray in service without a suitable reward. I am well pleased with you, I have a regard for you; and without waiting till you have served your time, I will make your fortune. Without more ado, I will initiate you in the healing art, of which I have for so many years been at the head. Other physicians make the science to consist of various unintelligible branches; but I will shorten the road for you, and dispense with the drudgery of studying natural philosophy, pharmacy, botany, and anatomy. Remember, my friend, that bleeding and drinking warm water are the two grand principles, — the true secret of curing all the distempers incident to humanity. Yes, this marvelous secret which I reveal to you, and which Nature, beyond the reach of my colleagues, has failed in rescuing from my pen, is comprehended in these two articles; namely, bleeding and drenching. Here you have the sum total of my philosophy; you are thoroughly bottomed in medicine, and may raise yourself to the summit of fame on the shoulders of my long experience. You may enter into partnership at once, by keeping the books in the morning and going out to visit patients in the afternoon. While I dose the nobility and clergy, you shall labor in your vocation among the lower orders; and when you have felt your ground a little, I will get you admitted into our body. You are a philosopher, Gil Blas, though you have never graduated; the common herd of them, though they have graduated in due form and order, are likely to run out the length of their tether without knowing their right hand from their left.»

I thanked the doctor for having so speedily enabled me to serve as his deputy; and by way of acknowledging his goodness, promised to follow his system to the end of my career, with a magnanimous indifference about the aphorisms of Hippocrates. But that engagement was not to be taken to the letter. This tender attachment to water went against the grain, and I had a scheme for drinking wine every day snugly among the patients. I left off wearing my own suit a second time, to take up one of my master's and look like an experienced practitioner. After which I brought my medical theories into play, leaving those it might concern to look to the event. I began on an alguazil in a pleurisy; he was condemned to be bled with the utmost rigor of the law, at the same time that the system was to be replenished copiously with water. Next I made a lodgment in the veins of a gouty pastry-cook, who roared like a lion by reason of gouty spasms. I stood on no more ceremony with his blood than with that of the alguazil, and laid no restriction on his taste for simple liquids. My prescriptions brought me in twelve rials: an incident so auspicious in my professional career, that I only wished for the plagues of Egypt on all the hale subjects of Valladolid. . . .

I was no sooner at home than Doctor Sangrado came in. I talked to him about the patients I had seen, and paid into his hands eight remaining rials of the twelve I had received for my prescriptions.

«Eight rials!» said he, as he counted them: «mighty little for two visits! But we must take things as we find them.» In the spirit of taking things as he found them, he laid violent hands on six, giving me the other two. «Here, Gil Blas,» continued he, «see what a foundation to build upon. I make over to you the fourth of all you may bring me. You will soon feather your nest, my friend; for by the blessing of Providence, there will be a great deal of ill health this year."

I had reason to be content with my dividend; since, having determined to keep back the third part of what I received in my rounds, and afterwards touching another fourth of the remainder,—then half of the whole, if arithmetic is anything more than a deception, would become my perquisite. This inspired me with new zeal for my profession. The next day, as soon as I had dined, I resumed my medical paraphernalia and took the field once more. I visited several patients on the list, and treated their several complaints in one invariable routine. Hitherto things went on under the rose; and no individual, thank Heaven, had risen up in rebellion against my prescriptions. But let a physician's cures be as extraordinary as they will, some quack or other is always ready to rip up his reputation. I was called in to a grocer's son in a dropsy. Whom should I find there before me but a little black-looking physician, by name Doctor Cuchillo, introduced by a relation of the family. I bowed round most profoundly, but dipped lowest to the personage whom I took to have been invited to a consultation with me. He returned my compliment with a distant air; then, having stared me in the face for a few seconds,—"Signor Doctor," said he, "I beg pardon for being inquisitive: I thought I was acquainted with all my brethren in Valladolid, but I confess your physiognomy is altogether new. You must have been settled but a short time in town." I avowed myself a young practitioner, acting as yet under the direction of Doctor Sangrado. "I wish you joy," replied he politely: "you are studying under a great man. You must doubtless have seen a vast deal of sound practice, young as you appear to be." He spoke this with so easy an assurance that I was at a loss whether he meant it seriously, or was laughing at me. While I was conning over my reply, the grocer, seizing on the opportunity, said, "Gentlemen, I am persuaded of your both being perfectly competent in your art: have the goodness without ado to take the case in hand, and devise some effectual means for the restoration of my son's health."

Thereupon the little pulse-counter set himself about reviewing the patient's situation; and after having dilated to me on all the symptoms, asked me what I thought the fittest method of treatment. "I am of opinion," replied I, "that he should be bled once a day, and drink as much warm water as he can swallow.» At these words, our diminutive doctor said to me, with a malicious simper, «And so you think such a course will save the patient?» «Not a doubt of it,» exclaimed I in a confident tone: «it must produce that effect, because it is a certain method of cure for all distempers. Ask Signor Sangrado.» «At that rate,» retorted he, «Celsus is altogether in the wrong; for he contends that the readiest way to cure a dropsical subject is to let him almost die of hunger and thirst.» «Oh, as for Celsus,» interrupted I, «he is no oracle of mine; as fallible as the meanest of us: I often have occasion to bless myself for going contrary to his dogmas.» «I discover by your language,» said Cuchillo, «the safe and sure method of practice Doctor Sangrado instills into his pupils. Bleeding and drenching are the extent of his resources. No wonder so many worthy people are cut off under his direction.» — «No defamation!» interrupted I with some acrimony: «a member of the faculty had better not begin throwing stones. Come, come, my learned doctor, patients can get to the other world without bleeding and warm water; and I question whether the most deadly of us has ever signed more passports than yourself. If you have any crow to pluck with Signor Sangrado, write against him; he will answer you, and we shall soon see who will have the best of the battle.» «By all the saints in the calendar!» swore he in a transport of passion, «you little know whom you are talking to. I have a tongue and a fist, my friend; and am not afraid of Sangrado, who with all his arrogance and affectation is but a ninny.» The size of the little death-dealer made me hold his anger cheap. I gave him a sharp retort; he sent back as good as I brought, till at last we came to cuffs. We had pulled a few handfuls of hair from each other's head before the grocer and his kinsman could part us. When they had brought this about, they fee'd me for my attendance, and retained my antagonist, whom they thought the more skillful of the two.

Another adventure succeeded close on the heels of this. I went to see a huge chanter in a fever. As soon as he heard me talk of warm water, he showed himself so averse to this specific as to fall into a fit of swearing. He abused me in all possible shapes, and threatened to throw me out at window. I was in a greater hurry to get out of his house than to get in. I did not choose to see any more patients that day, and repaired to the inn where I had agreed to meet Fabricio. He was there first.

As we found ourselves in a tippling humor, we drank hard, and returned to our employers in a pretty pickle; that is to say, so-so in the upper story. Signor Sangrado was not aware of my being drunk, because he took the lively gestures which accompanied the relation of my quarrel with the little doctor for an effect of the agitation not yet subsided after the battle. Besides, he came in for his share in my report; and feeling himself nettled by Cuchillo,—« You have done well, Gil Blas,» said he, « to defend the character of our practice against this little abortion of the faculty. So he takes upon him to set his face against watery drenches in dropsical cases? An ignorant fellow! I maintain, I do, in my own person, that the use of them may be reconciled to the best theories. Yes, water is a cure for all sorts of dropsies, just as it is good for rheumatisms and the green-sickness. It is excellent, too, in those fevers where the effect is at once to parch and to chill; and even miraculous in those disorders ascribed to cold, thin, phlegmatic, and pituitous humors. This opinion may appear strange to young practitioners like Cuchillo, but it is right orthodox in the best and soundest systems; so that if persons of that description were capable of taking a philosophical view, instead of crying me down they would become my most zealous advocates.»

In his rage, he never suspected me of drinking: for to exasperate him still more against the little doctor, I had thrown into my recital some circumstances of my own addition. Yet engrossed as he was by what I had told him, he could not help taking notice that I drank more water than usual that evening.

In fact, the wine had made me very thirsty. Any one but Sangrado would have distrusted my being so very dry as to swallow down glass after glass; but as for him, he took it for granted in the simplicity of his heart that I began to acquire a relish for aqueous potations. «Apparently, Gil Blas,» said he, with a gracious smile, « you have no longer such a dislike to water. As Heaven is my judge, you quaff it off like nectar! It is no wonder, my friend; I was certain you would take a liking to that liquor.» « Sir,» replied I, « there is a tide in the affairs of men: with my present lights I would give all the wine in Valladolid for a pint of water.» This answer delighted the doctor, who would not lose so fine an opportunity of expatiating on the excellence of water. He undertook to ring the changes once more in its praise; not like a hireling pleader, but as an enthusiast in the cause. «A thousand times,» exclaimed he, «a thousand and a thousand times of greater value, as being more innocent than our modern taverns, were those baths of ages past, whither the people went, not shamefully to squander their fortunes and expose their lives by swilling themselves with wine, but assembled there for the decent and economical amusement of drinking warm water. It is difficult to admire enough the patriotic forecast of those ancient politicians who established places of public resort where water was dealt out gratis to all comers, and who confined wine to the shops of the apothecaries, that its use might be prohibited save under the direction of physicians. What a stroke of wisdom! It is doubtless to preserve the seeds of that antique frugality, emblematic of the golden age, that persons are found to this day, like you and me, who drink nothing but water, and are persuaded they possess a prevention or a cure for every ailment, provided our warm water has never boiled; for I have observed that water when it is boiled is heavier, and sits less easily on the stomach.»

While he was holding forth thus eloquently, I was in danger more than once of splitting my sides with laughing. But I contrived to keep my countenance; nay, more, to chime in with the doctor's theory. I found fault with the use of wine, and pitied mankind for having contracted an untoward relish for so pernicious a beverage. Then, finding my thirst not sufficiently allayed, I filled a large goblet with water, and after having swilled it like a horse,—«Come, sir,» said I to my master, «let us drink plentifully of this beneficial liquor. Let us make those early establishments of dilution you so much regret, live again in your house.» He clapped his hands in ecstasy at these words, and preached to me for a whole hour about suffering no liquid but water to pass my lips. To confirm the habit, I promised to drink a large quantity every evening; and to keep my word with less violence to my private inclinations, I went to bed with a determined purpose of going to the tavern every day.

GIL BLAS BECOMES THE ARCHBISHOP'S FAVORITE, AND THE CHANNEL OF ALL HIS FAVORS

From ‹Gil Blas›

I HAD been after dinner to get together my baggage, and take my horse from the inn where I had put up; and afterwards returned to supper at the archbishop's palace, where a neatly furnished room was got ready for me, and such a bed as was more likely to pamper than to mortify the flesh. The day following, his Grace sent for me quite as soon as I was ready to go to him. It was to give me a homily to transcribe. He made a point of having it copied with all possible accuracy. It was done to please him; for I omitted neither accent, nor comma, nor the minutest tittle of all he had marked down. His satisfaction at observing this was heightened by its being unexpected. «Eternal Father!» exclaimed he in a holy rapture, when he had glanced his eye over all the folios of my copy, «was ever anything seen so correct? You are too good a transcriber not to have some little smattering of the grammarian. Now tell me with the freedom of a friend: in writing it over, have you been struck with nothing that grated upon your feelings? Some little careless idiom, or some word used in an improper sense?» «Oh, may it please your Grace,» answered I with a modest air, «it is not for me, with my confined education and coarse taste, to aim at making critical remarks. And though ever so well qualified, I am satisfied that your Grace's works would come out pure from the essay.» The successor of the Apostles smiled at my answer. He made no observation on it; but it was easy to see through all his piety that he was an arrant author at the bottom: there is something in that dye that not heaven itself can wash out.

I seemed to have purchased the fee simple of his good graces by my flattery. Day after day did I get a step farther in his esteem; and Don Ferdinand, who came to see him very often, told me my footing was so firm that there could not be a doubt but my fortune was made. Of this my master himself gave me a proof some little time afterwards; and the occasion was as follows:—One evening in his closet he rehearsed before me, with appropriate emphasis and action, a homily which he was to deliver the next day in the cathedral. He did not content himself with asking me what I thought of it in the gross, but insisted on my telling him what passages struck me most. I had the good fortune to pick out those which were nearest to his own taste,—his favorite commonplaces. Thus, as luck would have it, I passed in his estimation for a man who had a quick and natural relish of the real and less obvious beauties in a work. « This indeed,» exclaimed he, «is what you may call having discernment and feeling in perfection! Well, well, my friend! it cannot be said of you,—

'Bœotum in crasso jurares aëre natum.'»*

In a word, he was so highly pleased with me as to add in a tone of extraordinary emotion, «Never mind, Gil Blas! henceforward take no care about hereafter: I shall make it my business to please you among the favored children of my bounty. You have my best wishes; and to prove to you that you have them, I shall take you into my inmost confidence.»

These words were no sooner out of his mouth, than I fell at his Grace's feet, quite overwhelmed with gratitude. I embraced his elliptical legs with almost pagan idolatry, and considered myself as a man on the high-road to a very handsome fortune. «Yes, my child,» resumed the archbishop, whose speech had been cut short by the rapidity of my prostration, «I mean to make you the receiver-general of all my inmost ruminations. Hearken attentively to what I am going to say. I have a great pleasure in preaching. The Lord sheds a blessing on my homilies; they sink deep into the hearts of sinners; set up a glass in which vice sees its own image, and bring back many from the paths of error into the high-road of repentance. What a heavenly sight, when a miser, scared at the hideous picture of his avarice drawn by my eloquence, opens his coffers to the poor and needy, and dispenses the accumulated store with a liberal hand! The voluptuary too is snatched from the pleasures of the table; ambition flies at my command to the wholesome discipline of the monastic cell; while female frailty, tottering on the brink of ruin, with one ear open to the siren voice of the seducer and the other to my saintly correctives, is restored to domestic happiness and the approving smile of heaven, by the timely warnings of the pulpit. These miraculous conversions, which happen almost every Sunday, ought of themselves to goad me on in the career of saving souls. Nevertheless, to conceal no part of my weakness from my monitor, there is another reward on which my heart is intent,—a reward which the seraphic scrupulousness of my virtue to little purpose condemns as too carnal,—a literary reputation for a sublime and elegant style. The honor of being handed down to posterity as a perfect pulpit orator has its irresistible attractions. My compositions are generally thought to be equally powerful and persuasive; but I could wish of all things to steer clear of the rock on which good authors split who are too long before the public, and to retire from professional life with my reputation in undiminished lustre. To this end, my dear Gil Blas," continued the prelate, "there is one thing requisite from your zeal and friendship. Whenever it shall strike you that my pen begins to contract, as it were, the ossification of old age, whenever you see my genius in its climacteric, do not fail to give me a hint. There is no trusting to one's self in such a case: pride and conceit were the original sin of man. The probe of criticism must be intrusted to an impartial stander-by, of fine talents and unshaken probity. Both those requisites centre in you: you are my choice, and I give myself up to your direction."—"Heaven be praised, my lord," said I, "there is no need to trouble yourself with any such thoughts yet. Besides, an understanding of your Grace's mold and calibre will last out double the time of a common genius; or to speak with more certainty and truth, it will never be the worse for wear, if you live to the age of Methusalem. I consider you as a second Cardinal Ximenes, whose powers, superior to decay, instead of flagging with years seemed to derive new vigor from their approximation with the heavenly regions." "No flattery, my friend!" interrupted he. "I know myself to be in danger of failing all at once. At my age one begins to be sensible of infirmities, and those of the body communicate with the mind. I repeat it to you, Gil Blas, as soon as you shall be of opinion that my head is not so clear as usual, give me warning of it instantly. Do not be afraid of offending by frankness and sincerity: to put me in mind of my own frailty will be the strongest proof of your affection for me. Besides, your very interest is concerned in it; for if it should, by any spite of chance towards you, come to my ears that the people say in town, 'His Grace's sermons produce no longer their accustomed impression; it is time for him to abandon his pulpit to younger candidates,'—I do assure you, most seriously and solemnly, you will lose not only my friendship, but the provision for life that I have promised you. Such will be the result of your silly tampering with truth."

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*«You would have sworn he was born in the wit-dulling air of Bœotia.»

Here my patron left off to wait for my answer, which was an echo of his speech, and a promise of obeying him in all things. From that moment there were no secrets from me; I became the prime favorite. All the household, except Melchior de la Ronda, looked at me with an eye of envy. It was curious to observe the manner in which the whole establishment, from the highest to the lowest, thought it necessary to demean themselves towards his Grace's confidential secretary; there was no meanness to which they would not stoop to curry favor with me: I could scarcely believe they were Spaniards. I left no stone unturned to be of service to them, without being taken in by their interested assiduities. . . .

Two months after this worthy gentleman had left us, in the luxuriant harvest of my highest favor, a lowering storm came suddenly over the episcopal palace: the archbishop had a stroke of apoplexy. By dint of immediate applications and good nursing, in a few days there was no bodily appearance of disease remaining. But his reverend intellects did not so easily recover from their lethargy. I could not help observing it to myself in the very first discourse that he composed. Yet there was not such a wide gap between the merits of the present and the former ones as to warrant the inference that the sun of oratory was many degrees advanced in its post-meridian course. A second homily was worth waiting for, because that would clearly determine the line of my conduct. Alas, and well-a-day! when that second homily came, it was a knock-down argument. Sometimes the good prelate moved forward, and sometimes he moved backward; sometimes he mounted up into the garret, and sometimes dipped down into the cellar. It was a composition of more sound than meaning; something like a superannuated schoolmaster's theme when he attempts to give his boys more sense than he possesses of his own, or like a capuchin's sermon which only scatters a few artificial flowers of paltry rhetoric over a barren desert of doctrine.

I was not the only person whom the alteration struck. The audience at large, when he delivered it, as if they too had been pledged to watch the advances of dotage, said to one another in a whisper all around the church, « Here is a sermon with symptoms of apoplexy in every paragraph. » « Come, my good Coryphæus of the public taste in homilies, » said I then to myself, « prepare to do your office. You see that my lord archbishop is going very fast,—you ought to warn him of it, not only as his bosom friend on whose sincerity he relies, but lest some blunt fellow should anticipate you and bolt out the truth in an offensive manner; in that case you know the consequence: you would be struck out of his will, where, no doubt, you have a more convertible bequest than the licentiate Sedillo's library."

But as reason, like Janus, looks at things with two faces, I began to consider the other side of the question: the hint seemed difficult to wrap up so as to make it palatable. Authors in general are stark mad on the subject of their own works, and such an author might be more testy than the common herd of the irritable race; but that suspicion seemed illiberal on my part, for it was impossible that my freedom should be taken amiss when it had been forced upon me by so positive an injunction. Add to this, that I reckoned upon handling the subject skillfully, and cramming discretion down his throat like a high-seasoned epicurean dish. After all my pro and con, finding that I risked more by keeping silence than by breaking it, I determined to venture on the delicate duty of speaking my mind.

Now there was but one difficulty,—a difficulty indeed!—how to open the business. Luckily the orator himself extricated me from that embarrassment, by asking what they said of him in the world at large, and whether people were tolerably well pleased with his last discourse. I answered that there could be but one opinion about his homilies; but that it should seem as if the last had not quite struck home to the hearts of the audience, like those which had gone before. "Do you really mean what you say, my friend?" replied he, with a sort of wriggling surprise. "Then my congregation are more in the temper of Aristarchus than of Longinus!" "No, may it please your Grace," rejoined I: "quite the contrary. Performances of that order are above the reach of vulgar criticism: there is not a soul but expects to be saved by their influence. Nevertheless, since you have made it my duty to be sincere and unreserved, I shall take the liberty of just stating that your last discourse is not written with quite the overpowering eloquence and conclusive argument of your former ones. Does not your Grace feel just as I do on the subject?"

This ignorant and stupid frankness of mine completely blanched my master's cheek; but he forced a fretful smile, and said, "Then, good Master Gil Blas, that piece does not exactly hit your fancy?" "I did not mean to say that, your Grace," interrupted I, looking very foolish. "It is very far superior to what any one else could produce, though a little below par with respect to your own works in general.» «I know what you mean,» replied he. «You think I am going down-hill, do you not? Out with it at once. It is your opinion that it is time for me to think of retiring?» «I should never have had the presumption,» said I, «to deliver myself with so little reserve, if it had not been your Grace's express command. I act in entire obedience to your Grace's orders; and I most obsequiously implore your Grace not to take offense at my boldness.» «I were unfit to live in a Christian land,» interrupted he, with stammering impatience,—«I were unfit to live in a Christian land if I liked you the less for such a Christian virtue as sincerity. A man who does not love sincerity sets his face against the distinguishing mark between a friend and a flatterer. I should have given you infinite credit for speaking what you thought, if you had thought anything that deserved to be spoken. I have been finely taken in by your outside show of cleverness, without any solid foundation of sober judgment!»

Though completely unhorsed, and at the enemy's mercy, I wanted to make terms of decent capitulation, and to go unmolested into winter quarters; but let those who think to appease an exasperated author, and especially an author whose ear has been long attuned to the music of his own praises, take warning by my fate. «Let us talk no more on the subject, my very young friend,» said he. «You are as yet scarcely in the rudiments of good taste, and utterly incompetent to distinguish between gold and tinsel. You are yet to learn that I never in all my life composed a finer homily than that unfortunate one which had not the honor of your approbation. The immortal part of me, by the blessing of heaven on me and my congregation, is less weighed down by human infirmity than when the flesh was stronger. We all grow wiser as we grow older, and I shall in future select the people about me with more caution; nor submit the castigation of my works but to a much abler critic than yourself. Get about your business!» pursued he, giving me an angry shove by the shoulders out of his closet; «go and tell my treasurer to pay you a hundred ducats, and take my priestly blessing in addition to that sum. God speed you, good Master Gil Blas! I heartily pray that you may do well in the world! There is nothing to stand in your way but the want of a little better taste.

THE VINTNER'S STORY

From 'The Devil upon Two Sticks'

«Under the closet there is a dungeon that serves for a lodging to a young vintner.»—«What, my host again?» cried Leandro; «sure these people have a mind to poison all the world.» «This man's case is not the same,» replied Asmodeus: «he was seized yesterday, and is likewise claimed by the Inquisition. I will in few words relate to you the subject of his commitment.

«An old soldier, by his courage, or rather patience, having mounted to the post of a sergeant in his company, came to raise recruits in this city. He inquired for a lodging at an inn, where he was answered that they had indeed empty rooms, but that they could not recommend any of them to him, because the house was haunted every night by a spirit, which treated all strangers very ill that were rash enough to lodge there. This did not at all balk the sergeant. 'Put me in what chamber you please,' said he, 'but give me a candle, wine, pipes, and tobacco; and as for the spirit, never trouble yourself about it,—ghosts have a respect for men of war who are grown old in the service.'

«As he seemed so resolute, he was shown into a chamber, where all that he desired was brought to him. He fell to drinking and smoking till midnight, and no spirit had yet disturbed the profound silence that reigned in the house. One would have imagined he feared this new guest; but betwixt one and two, the sergeant all of a sudden heard a terrible noise like the rattling of old iron, and immediately saw entering his chamber an apparition clothed in black and laden all round with iron chains. Our smoker, not in the least affrighted at this sight, drew his sword, advanced towards the spirit, and with the flat side of it gave him a very severe blow on the head.

«The apparition, not much used to meet with such bold guests, cried out; and perceiving the soldier going to begin with him again, he most humbly prostrated himself at his feet. 'Mr. Sergeant,' said he, 'for God's sake do not give me any more; but have mercy on a poor devil that casts himself at your feet. I conjure you by St. James, who, as you are, was a great soldier.' 'If you are willing to save your life,' answered the soldier, 'you must tell me who you are, and speak without the least prevarication; or else this moment I cut you down the middle, as your knights of old were used to serve the giants they encountered.' At these words, the ghost, finding what sort of man he had to do with, resolved to own all.

"'I am the principal servant of this inn,' replied the spirit; 'my name is Guillermo; I am in love with my master's only daughter, and she does not dislike me: but the father and mother having a better match in view, the girl and I have agreed, in order to compel them to make me their son-in-law, that I shall every night act the part which I now do. I wrap myself up in a long black cloak and hang the jack-chain about my neck. Thus equipped, I run up and down the house from the cellar to the garret, and make all the noise which you have heard. When I am at my master's and mistress's chamber-door, I stop and cry out: "Do not hope that I will ever let you rest till you marry Juanna to Guillermo, your upper drawer." 'After having pronounced these words with a hoarse, broken voice, I continue my noise, and at a window enter the closet where Juanna lies alone, to give her an account of what I have done.—Mr. Sergeant,' continued Guillermo, 'you see I have told you the whole truth. I know that after this confession you may ruin me by discovering it to my master; but if you please to serve instead of undoing me, I swear that my acknowledgments—'

"'Alas, what service can I do thee?' interrupted the soldier. 'You need do no more,' returned Guillermo, 'than to say to-morrow that you have seen the spirit, that it so terribly affrighted you—' 'How? terribly affrighted!' interrupted the soldier; 'would you have Sergeant Annibal Antonio Quebrantador own such a thing as fear? I had rather ten thousand devils should—' 'That's not absolutely necessary,' interrupted Guillermo; 'and after all it is not much matter what you say, provided you second my design. And when I have married Juanna and am settled, I promise to treat you and all your friends nobly for nothing every day.'—'You are a very tempting person, Mr. Guillermo,' said the soldier. 'You propose to me to support a tribe: it is a serious affair, which requires mature deliberation; but the consequences hurry me on. So continue your noise; give your account to Juanna, and I will take care of the rest.'

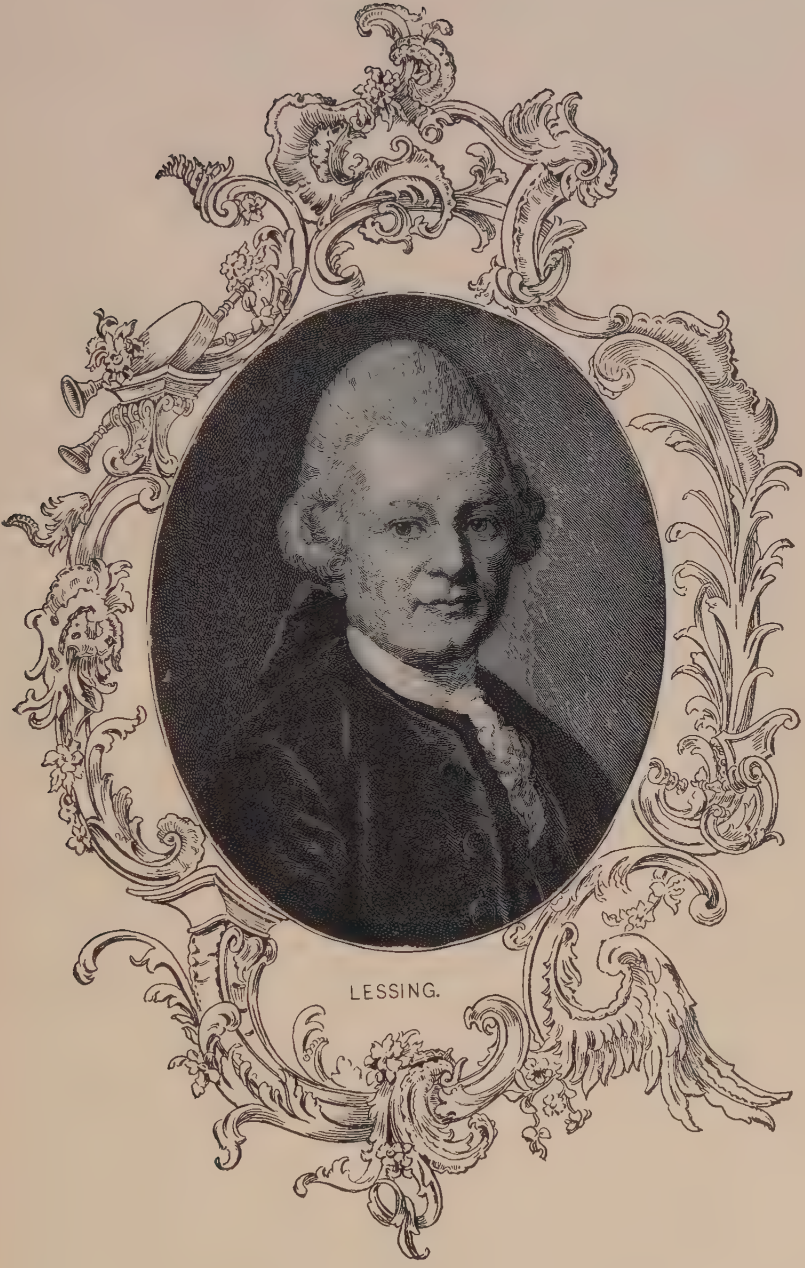
"Accordingly, next morning he said to his landlord and landlady: 'I have seen the spirit and have talked with it. It is a very honest fellow. "I am," said he, "the great-grandfather of the master of this house. I had a daughter whom I promised to the father of the grandfather of this drawer. However, neglecting the word I had given him, I married her to another, and died soon after, and ever since am tormented as the punishment of my perjury, and shall never be at rest till one of my family shall marry one of Guillermo's; and it is for this reason I walk here every night. Yet it is to no purpose that I bid them marry Juanna to their head drawer. The son of my grandson and his wife turn the deaf ear to all I can say. But tell them, if you please, Mr. Sergeant, that if they do not immediately comply with my desires, I shall proceed to action and will torment them both in an extraordinary manner."'

"The host, being silly enough, was terrified at this discourse; but the hostess, yet more silly than her husband, fancying that the spirit was always at her heels, consented to the match, and Guillermo married Juanna the next day, and set up in another part of the town. Sergeant Quebrantador did not fail to visit him often; and he, in acknowledgment of the service he had done him, gave him as much wine as he cared for. This so pleased the soldier that he brought thither not only all his friends, but listed his men there, and made all his recruits drunk.

"But at last Guillermo, grown weary of satiating such a crew of drunkards, told his mind to the soldier; who, without ever thinking that he had exceeded his agreement, was so unjust as to call Guillermo a little ungrateful rascal. The host answered; the sergeant replied; and the dialogue ended with several strokes with the flat side of the sword, which Guillermo received. Several persons passing by took the vintner's part; the sergeant wounded three or four, but was suddenly fallen on by a crowd of alguazils, who seized him as a disturber of the public peace and carried him to prison. He there declared what I have told you: and upon his deposition, the officers have also seized Guillermo; the father-in-law requires the annulling of the marriage, and the Holy Office being informed that Guillermo is rich, have thought fit to take cognizance of it."

"As I hope to be saved," said Don Cleofas, "this same Holy Inquisition is very alert. The moment they see the least glimpse of profit —"

"Softly," interrupted the cripple; "have a care what freedom you take with this tribunal, for it has its spies everywhere, even of things that were never spoken. I myself dare not speak of it without trembling."



LESSING.

GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING

(1729–1781)

BY E. P. EVANS

Lessing was born January 22d, 1729, at Camenz in the Saxon province of Upper Lusatia, and died at Brunswick, February 15th, 1781. His father was a clergyman and his mother the daughter of a clergyman; and his earliest known ancestor, Clarence Lessigk, a curate in the Saxon Erzgebirge, was one of the signers of the *formula concordiæ* published in 1580, and designed to allay certain doctrinal dissensions which had arisen soon after the death of the reformer. From this ecclesiastical progenitor his line of descent ran unbroken through six generations of theologians, jurists, burgomasters, and other men of culture; and in illustration of the «survival of the fittest,» the family name and characteristics were in our own day the heritage of one of the most eminent historical painters of Germany. Lessing belonged therefore to what Oliver Wendell Holmes used to call the «Academic Races,» in whom scholarly tastes and aptitudes are inbred and transmitted from father to son, and who take to learning almost as instinctively as a cat takes to mousing. It is the scions of such a stock that constitute the largest contingent of those who pursue university studies, and fill the ranks of the learned professions; producing a horde of pedants like Lessing's younger brother Theophilus, and at rare intervals a man of genius like himself.

In June 1741, when he was scarcely thirteen, he was sent to the then celebrated grammar school at Meissen (Fürstenschule zu St. Afra), where he completed the prescribed six-years' course of study in five years. In answer to the father's inquiry concerning his son's proficiency, the rector replied: «He is a horse that needs double fodder. The lessons, which are hard for others, are nothing for him. We cannot use him much longer.» On September 20th, 1746, he was matriculated as a student of theology in the University of Leipsic. Two years later he went to Wittenberg, thence to Berlin, and again to Wittenberg, where he took the degree of master of arts on April 29th, 1752.

During these half a dozen years of quite varied and rather vagrant academical life, he devoted himself with energy and enthusiasm to literary pursuits, and developed a marked talent for dramatic composition. He wrote a comedy entitled 'The Young Scholar.' The juvenile pedant, as he afterwards states, « was the only kind of ninny which at that time it was impossible for me not to be intimately acquainted with »; his play was therefore a study from life, rendered more realistic and vivid by a dawning consciousness of the danger to which he was himself exposed. The piece was given with great applause by the troupe of the celebrated Madame Neuber at Leipsic, whose citizens were only too familiar with the original of Damis. The best of his earlier plays is unquestionably 'Miss Sara Sampson,' a tragedy in five acts, first represented at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, July 10th, 1755, when, as we are told, the spectators « sat four hours like statues, and wept and wept.» Nowadays its high-flown sentimentalism would excite laughter rather than tears; and although it was a theatrical success, and even had the distinction of being translated into French, it has long since fallen into oblivion. Its present importance is purely historical, as the first specimen of the tragedy of middle-class life on the German stage. Of Lessing's later and riper contributions to dramatic literature, three may be said to have an intrinsic and permanent value, 'Minna von Barnhelm,' 'Emilia Galotti,' and 'Nathan the Wise': a comedy, a tragedy, and what might be called a didactic drama, although each of these productions is pervaded by an earnest and quite obvious moral purpose.

The salient feature of 'Minna von Barnhelm,' published in 1767, is its national character,— so far as the term « national » can be applied to anything German at that time. Chiefly for this reason it appeared as « a shining meteor » to the eyes of Goethe, who was then a student in Leipsic, and who, in his talks with Eckermann in the last years of his life, recalled with reminiscent enthusiasm the immense influence it exerted upon the young people of his day. The hero, Major Tellheim, an officer in the service of Frederick the Great, has during the Seven Years' War advanced the money for the payment of a heavy contribution levied on a poor Saxon province. This noble and generous act so deeply impresses Minna von Barnhelm, a wealthy young lady of the neighborhood, that she seeks his acquaintance and becomes his betrothed. On the conclusion of peace, the draft given by the Saxon authorities to Tellheim is construed by the Prussian government into evidence of his having been bribed by the enemy; and he is therefore cashiered. His fine sense of honor makes him unwilling to involve the young lady in his disgrace, and he accordingly releases her from her engagement. As all her protests against such a proceeding prove unavailing, she resolves to accomplish her purpose by artifice, and pretends that she has been disinherited by her uncle on account of her betrothal. The cunning device succeeds. Believing her to be poor and deserted, Tellheim is eager to wed her and take her under his protection; especially as meanwhile he has received a letter from the King, recognizing the true state of the case as regards the draft, ordering it to be paid, and offering to restore him to his former rank in the army. It is now Minna's turn to scruple at such an unequal marriage, and to urge against it all the arguments which he had used, but of which he would not admit the force in their present application. Finally the uncle, who has always held Tellheim in high esteem, appears upon the scene; the mystery is cleared up, and the lovers are made happy. The subordinate characters — Just, Werner, Franziska, and the sordid innkeeper — are admirably drawn; and the introduction of le Chevalier Riccaut de la Marlinière is a happy hit at the petty German rulers, whose courts swarmed with titled adventurers of this sort, and even at Frederic the Great, who admitted them to his army. Underlying the love story is a deeper political meaning; and the nuptial union of Tellheim and Minna is made to symbolize the natural ties of race which should bind together the different members of the German family, then alienated and antagonized by dynastic jealousies and interests.

In 'Emilia Galotti' the scene is laid in Italy, and the catastrophe recalls the days of the old Roman Republic; but the play is wholly German in spirit, and holds the mirror up to the frivolous and tyrannical princelings of Lessing's own time and nation. The heroine, the daughter of a colonel and the betrothed of Count Appiani, has excited the admiration and passion of the reigning sovereign, an effeminate and sentimental young man, whose few generous impulses have been checked and stunted by the consciousness of irresponsible power and the servile flattery of courtiers, and who has grown up into a pleasure-seeking and unscrupulous egotist. On learning that Emilia is about to marry Appiani, he gives his chamberlain, the sycophantic and utterly unprincipled Marinelli, *carte blanche* to use every means to prevent it; the result of which is the assassination of the groom on his wedding-day and the abduction of the bride, who, under the pretext of protecting her from the bandits, is carried off to the prince's castle. Her father hastens thither, and learns the real cause of Appiani's taking-off in an accidental interview with the prince's discarded mistress, Countess Orsina, who gives him a dagger and bids him do his duty. The father, disarmed by a gracious word of his Serene Highness, lets the favorable opportunity pass, and finally thrusts the dagger into the heart of his daughter, who, fearing lest she might yield to the seductions of the court and to the suit of her princely lover, entreats him to do the deed. This dénouement is the weak point in the play. Times have changed since the age of

Virginius; and the heroic act of a father to whom the law gave the power of life and death over his children does not fit into the plot of a modern tragedy. The sentimental metaphor of «a rose broken from its stem before the storm strips it of its leaves,» first used by the daughter and repeated by the father, hardly suits the case. The characters Appiani and Odoardo Galotti, in contrast to Marinelli, the type of contemporary «court vermin,» are admirably portrayed; the dialogue is simple and compact, and the dramatic movement remarkably direct and rapid. The piece was first represented at Brunswick, March 13th, 1772, and has kept its place on the German stage ever since.

Still more remote from Lessing's age and country is the action of 'Nathan the Wise'; the scene of which is laid in Jerusalem during the Third Crusade, in the latter half of the twelfth century, but which nevertheless bore the closest relation to his own intellectual life and to that of his time. The germ of the drama is the tale of Saladin and the Jew Melchizedek in Boccaccio's 'Decameron,' which Lessing used as a parable to illustrate and enforce his views of religious toleration. Indeed, the whole play is little more than a dialogue in iambics on this subject, which came to his hand as a new and effective weapon in the warfare which he had been waging against theological bigotry, in his controversy with the Hamburg pastor Götze. It was published in 1779, and represented in Berlin four years later.

Lessing's last word in this polemical discussion was his essay of a hundred paragraphs entitled 'The Education of the Human Race,' and containing a complete philosophy of religion in a nutshell. These acute and suggestive theses will still be read with interest, although the recent comparative study of religions has rendered some of them untenable.

An additional evidence of the vigor and versatility of his genius is seen in the acute and comprehensive spirit with which he handled æsthetical topics. His 'Laocoön' (published in May 1766), although a fragment, still remains an unrivaled masterpiece of art criticism; and the line of demarcation which he drew between the speaking and the imaging arts has never been disturbed. He fixed the limits of poetry and painting as different modes of representation, and set aside once for all the famous dictum of Simonides, *Ut pictura poesis*, which had received the indorsement of Winckelmann and which he himself had formerly accepted. The fruitfulness of this «splendid thought,» as Goethe calls it, is perceptible in the subsequent development of the principles of criticism as applied to literature and the fine arts in Germany.

Even more fugitive and fragmentary than 'Laocoön' is Lessing's 'Dramaturgy,' written during his brief connection with the Hamburg theatre as critic in 1767, and concluded in the following year after the financial failure of that ill-starred enterprise. But here too the good seed, which seemed then to have been sown among thorns or on stony places, has sprung up and borne fruit a hundredfold. This is the result which Lessing wished to attain. Number 95 of this series of papers ends as follows: «Just here I remind my readers that these pages are by no means intended to contain a dramatic system. I am therefore not bound to solve all the difficulties which I raise. I am quite willing that my thoughts should seem to want connection, and even to contradict each other, if they are only thoughts in which the readers may find material for thinking themselves. I aim at nothing more than to scatter *fermenta cognitionis.*» In the performance of this useful function he has seldom been surpassed.

Lessing possessed a clearness of insight and a vigor of mind bordering on genius; he was a master of creative criticism, an original thinker, and what is more, a man of sterling character and strictest intellectual integrity: but he was not «of imagination all compact,» not a great poet, and never claimed to be. The manly stride of his prose easily turns to mincing steps in his verse. His epigrams and odes and lyrics are rhythmically correct, but purely mechanical and often exceedingly stiff; and his plays, although dramatically well constructed, lack the qualities which he as a critic appreciated in Shakespeare, but which the keenest critical faculty can never supply. But with all these deficiencies on the poetic side of his nature, of which no one was more fully conscious than himself, he still remains one of the noblest figures and most permanent influences for good in German literature.

E. P. Evans

NAMES

I ASKED my maiden fair one day:—
«What shall I call thee in my lay?
Wilt thou be as Daphne famed?
Wilt thou Galatea, Chloris,
Phyllis, Lesbia, or Doris
By posterity be named?»

«Ah!» replied my maiden fair,
«Names are naught but empty air.

Choose the one that suits the line:
Call me Galatea, Chloris,
Phyllis, Lesbia, or Doris,—
Call me anything, in fine,
If thou only call'st me Thine.»

EPIGRAM

Who will not mighty Klopstock praise?
Will everybody read him? Nay!
A little less extol our lays,
And read a little more, we pray.

[This epigram evidently suggested to James Russell Lowell his pithy characterization of Klopstock as «an immortality of unreadableness.» Lessing also, in a letter to Gleim (October 2d, 1757), asks: «What do you say to Klopstock's sacred songs? If you condemn them, I shall suspect your Christianity; if you approve of them, I shall question your taste.»]

THUNDER

Ho, friends! it thunders! Let us drink!
Fill up the bowl! For what care we?
Let hypocrites and villains shrink,
And minions bend the servile knee!
It thunders! drain the glasses dry!
Nor start like women with affright:
Just Jove may lash the sea-surge high,
His nectar he will never smite.

BENEFITS

E'en if a vicious man were like a leaky vat,
That wastes what it receives, pour in, for all of that!
If vat and man are not in too decrepit plight,
Keep pouring in thy gifts! How soon a crack soaks tight!

ON MR. R——*

That you're a poet, sir, I'm very glad;
But are you nothing more? Ah! that's too bad.

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* Probably Karl Wilhelm Ramler.

FROM ‹NATHAN THE WISE›

SALADIN —
Draw nearer, Jew! Still nearer! Close to me,
And have no fear!
Nathan — Let that be for thy foe!
Saladin — Thy name is Nathan.
Nathan — Yes.
Saladin — Nathan the Wise?
Nathan — No.
Saladin — Well! if not by thee thyself so called,
The people call thee so.
Nathan — Maybe, the people.
Saladin — Thou dost not think, forsooth, that I
The people's voice do scornfully disdain?
Indeed, I have long wished to know the man
The people call the Wise.
Nathan — What if they mean
By wise that he is only shrewd, and knows
His own advantage craftily to gain?
Saladin — His true advantage meanest thou thereby?
Nathan — Then the most selfish were the shrewdest too;
Then were indeed «crafty» and «wise» the same.
Saladin — I hear thee prove what thou wouldst contradict.
Man's truest gain, which people do not know,
Thou knowest or at least hast sought to know;
This thou hast pondered, and 'tis this alone
That makes man wise.
Nathan — And which each deems himself
To be.
Saladin — And now of modesty enough!
To hear it evermore, where one expects
Dry reason, sickens. [*He springs up.*
To the matter now!
But be honest, yes, be honest!
Nathan — Sultan,
It surely is my wish to serve thee so,
That worthy of thy further custom I
May still remain.
Saladin — To serve me? how?
Nathan — The best
Of all shalt thou receive, and have it at
The fairest price.

Saladin — What dost thou speak of, Jew?
Not of thy wares! The chafferer with thee
Shall be my sister. [*Aside:* That for the eavesdropper.]
With thee as merchant have I naught to do.
Nathan — Then doubtless thou thyself would'st know what I
Have on my journey, of the foe, who seems
To stir again, observed or happened on?
If plainly I —
Saladin — That too is not my drift
With thee. Of that I know already what
I require. — In short —
Nathan — Command me, Sultan.
Saladin — In something else that's wholly different
I now desire thy teaching. — Since thou art
So wise, pray tell me once what faith, what law
Has seemed to thee most genuine.
Nathan — Sultan,
I am a Jew.
Saladin — And I a Mussulman.
Between us is the Christian. Of these three
Religions, one alone can be the true.
A man like thee remains not standing there,
Where merely chance of birth has cast his lot;
Or if he there remain, then he remains
Through insight, reason, or through better choice.
Come now, impart to me thy insight, let
Me hear the reasons which I've lacked the time
Minutely to examine. Let me know —
Of course in strictest confidence — the grounds
That have availed to fix thy final choice,
That I may make it mine. How? Thou dost start?
Dost weigh me with thy eye? It may well be
That I'm the first of Sultans who e'er had
A whim like this, which yet methinks is not
Unworthy of a Sultan. — Is't not so?
Give answer! Speak! Or wishest thou to have
A moment to reflect? I give it thee.
Reflect, quickly reflect. I shall return
Without delay.

[*Retires to an adjoining room.*]

Nathan — Hm! hm! How very strange!
How dazed I am! What does the Sultan want?
What? I thought 'twas money, and he wishes — Truth.

And wishes it cash down and unalloyed,
As though 'twere coin — yes, ancient coin — that's weighed.
And that perhaps might do; but coin so new,
Which by the stamp alone is made to pass,
And may be counted out upon the board,—
That it is surely not. Can truth be put
Into the head like coin into a bag?
Who then is here the Jew? Is't I or he?
How then? If he in truth demand the truth?
For the distrust that he employs the truth
But as a trap, would be too mean! Too mean?
And what then for a magnate is too mean?
He rushed into the house and burst the door,
'Tis true — people should knock and listen first,
If they approach as friends. I must proceed
With care. But how? To be a downright Jew
Will never do. And not to be at all
A Jew, will do still less. If I'm no Jew,
Might he then ask why not a Mussulman?
That's it! That can save me! Not children only
Are fed with tales.— He comes. Well, let him come.

Saladin *returns*

Saladin —
[*Aside* — Here then the field is clear.] I've not returned
Too soon for thee? Are thy reflections ended?
If so, speak out. There's none that hears us here.
Nathan — Would the whole world might hear us.
Saladin — Is Nathan
So certain of his cause? Ha! that I call
A wise man! never to conceal the truth!
For it to hazard all — body and life,
Estate and blood!
Nathan — If it be needful, yes!
Or be of use.
Saladin — Henceforth then I may hope
That I rightly bear one of my titles:
«Reformer of the world and of the law.»
Nathan — Faith, 'tis a splendid title; yet before,
O Sultan, I may quite confide in thee,
Permit me to relate a tale.
Saladin — Why not?
I'm always fond of tales if they're well told.
Nathan — To tell them well is not my strongest point.
Saladin — Again so proudly modest? Make haste! the tale!

Nathan — In olden times a man lived in the East,
Who from a loving hand possessed a ring
Of priceless worth. An opal was the stone,
In which a hundred brilliant colors played,
And which the hidden virtue also had
Of making him who wore it, in this trust,
Pleasing to God and well beloved by man.
What wonder then that this man in the East
The ring upon his finger always kept,
And so disposed that it should be for aye
An heirloom in his house? He left the ring
Bequeathed unto the dearest of his sons,
Ordaining that he too the ring should leave
To that one of his sons whom he most loved,
And that this dearest one, without regard
To birth, by virtue of the ring alone
Should ever be the house's head and prince.
Thou understandest, Sultan?

Saladin — Yes; go on!

Nathan — Thus the ring came, from son to son, at last
To one who was the father of three sons,
Who all alike were dutiful to him,
And all of whom he therefore could not help
But love alike. Only from time to time
Now this one, now the other, now the third —
As each might chance to be alone with him,
And his effusive heart the other two
Did not divide — seemed worthier of the ring,
Which through fond weakness he'd to each of them
Promised in turn. Thus it went on as long
As it would do. But when he neared his death,
The kindly father was most sore perplexed.
It gave him pain to grieve two of his sons,
Who on his word relied. What should he do?
In secret to a jeweler he sends,
And orders him to make two other rings
According to the pattern of the first.
And bids him spare nor cost nor toil, that they
May prove to be alike and just like it.
The jeweler in this succeeds so well,
That when he brings the rings, the model ring
Not e'en the father longer can discern.
With joy he calls his sons, each one apart,
And gives to each his blessing and his ring —
And dies. Thou hear'st me, Sultan?

Saladin [*who has turned away astonished*]— Yes, I hear!
Make haste and bring thy story to an end.
Will it be —
Nathan — Already I have ended;
For what is still to follow, comes of course.
Scarce was the father dead, when each son comes
And brings his ring, and each would of the house
Be lord. They search, they quarrel, they accuse:
In vain; the right ring could not now be proved,—
[*After a pause, in which he awaits the Sultan's answer*]
Almost as little as to us can be
The right belief.
Saladin — How so? And that shall be
The answer to my question?
Nathan — It shall serve
Merely as my excuse, if I presume
Not to discriminate between the rings
The father ordered made with the intent
That they should indiscriminate remain.
Saladin — The rings! Sport not with me! I should have though
That the religions, which I named to thee,
Were easy to distinguish, e'en to dress
And e'en to meat and drink.
Nathan — But only not
As to the grounds on which they're thought to rest.
For are they not all based on history,
Traditional or written? And history
Must be received on trust—is it not so?
In whom now are we likeliest to trust?
In our own people, surely; in those men
Whose blood we are, and who from infancy
Have proved their love and never us deceived,
Unless 'twere wholesomer to be deceived.
How can I my forefathers less believe
Than thou dost thine? Or on the other hand,
Can ask of thee to say thy fathers lied,
In order not to contradict my own?
The same is true of Christians—is it not?
Saladin [*aside*]—
Now by the living God, the man is right,
And I'm struck dumb.
Nathan — Now to our rings let us
Return. As I have said, the sons brought suit
Against each other, and before the judge

Each truly swore that he'd received the ring
Directly from his father's hand, and swore —
Not the less true — that also long before
He had by him been solemnly assured
That he one day the ring's prerogative
Should certainly enjoy. And each declared
The father ne'er could have been false to him.
Ere such a loving father he'd suspect,
He'd sooner charge his brothers with foul play,
Though hitherto of them the very best
He always had been ready to believe;
And now he wished to find the traitors out,
That he might on them be avenged.
Saladin — And now
The judge? I long to hear what thou wilt make
The judge reply. Relate!
Nathan — The judge spoke thus:—
«If you the father cannot soon produce,
Then I dismiss you from my judgment-seat.
Think you that to solve riddles I sit here?
Or wait you till the right ring opes its mouth?
Yet stay! I hear the right ring doth possess
The magic power of making one beloved,
To God and man well pleasing. That alone
Must now decide. For surely the false rings
Will fail in *that*. Now whom love two of you
The most? Make haste and speak! Why are you mute?
Is't only inward that the rings do work,
Not outward? Does each one love himself the most?
Deceived deceivers are you then all three!
And of your rings all three are not the true.
Presumably the true ring being lost,
The father to conceal or to repair
The loss had three rings made for one.»
Saladin — Grand! grand!
Nathan — And thereupon the judge went on to say:—
«If you'll, instead of sentence, take advice,
This is my counsel: Let the matter rest
Just as it lies. If each of you has had
A ring presented by his father, then
Let each believe his own the genuine ring.
'Tis possible the father did not wish
To suffer any longer in his house
The one ring's tyranny! And certainly,

As he all three did love, and all alike,
He would not willingly oppress the two
To favor one. Well, then! Let each one strive
To imitate that love, so pure and free
From prejudice! Let each one vie with each
In showing forth the virtue of the stone
That's in his ring! Let him assist its might
With gentleness, forbearance, love of peace,
And with sincere submission to his God!
And if the virtues of the stones remain,
And in your children's children prove their power,
After a thousand years have passed
Let them appear again before this seat.
A wiser man than I will then sit here
And speak. Depart!» Thus said the modest judge.

ON LOVE OF TRUTH

From ‹Eine Duplik›

I KNOW not whether it be a duty to offer up fortune and life to the truth: certainly the courage and resolution necessary to such a sacrifice are not gifts which we can bestow upon ourselves. But I know it *is* a duty, if one undertake to teach the truth, to teach the whole of it or none at all, to teach it clearly and roundly, without enigmas or reserves, and with perfect confidence in its efficacy and utility; and the gifts required for such a decision *are* in our power. Whoever will not acquire these, or when acquired will not use them, shows that he has a very poor opinion of the human intellect; and he deserves to lose the confidence of his hearers, who, while he frees them from some gross errors, yet withholds the entire truth, and thinks to satisfy them by a compromise with falsehood. For the greater the error, the shorter and straighter the way to the truth. On the other hand, subtle error can prevent our recognition of its nature, and forever blind us to the truth.

The man who is faithless to Truth in threatening dangers, may yet love her much; and Truth forgives him his infidelity for the sake of his love. But whosoever thinks of prostituting Truth under all sorts of masks and rouge, may indeed be her pimp, but he has never been her lover.

Not the truth of which any one is, or supposes himself to be, possessed, but the upright endeavor he has made to arrive at truth, makes the worth of the man. For not by the possession but by the pursuit of truth are his powers expanded, wherein alone his ever-growing perfection consists. Possession makes us easy, indolent, proud.

If God held all truth shut in his right hand, and in his left nothing but the ever-restless search after truth, although with the condition of for ever and ever erring, and should say to me, «Choose!» I should bow humbly to his left hand and say, «Father, give! pure truth is for Thee alone!»

THE MEANING OF HERESY

What is called a heretic has a very good side. It is a man who wishes to see with his own eyes. The only question is whether he has good eyes. In certain ages the name of heretic is the best title that a scholar can transmit to posterity; far better than that of sorcerer, magian, exorcist, for these serve to conceal many an impostor.

THE EDUCATION OF THE HUMAN RACE

What education is to the individual, revelation is to the whole human race.

2. Education is revelation which is given to the individual; revelation is education which has been and is still given to the human race.

3. Whether education, regarded from this point of view, can be of any use in pedagogics, I will not discuss here; but in theology it can surely be of very great use and remove many difficulties, if revelation can be conceived of as an education of the human race.

4. Education does not give to man anything which he could not acquire of himself, but only gives it to him more quickly and more easily. So too revelation does not give anything to the human race which human reason, if left to itself, would not attain; but it has given and still gives the most important of these things earlier.

5. As in education it is not a matter of indifference in what order the powers of the individual are developed, and as it cannot impart to him everything at once, so God in his revelation must observe a certain order and due moderation.

6. If the first man were immediately provided with the conception of one God, it would be impossible for the conception thus communicated and not acquired to preserve its original purity. As soon as human reason left to itself began to act upon it, it would divide the one infinite into several finites and give to each a designation.

7. It was thus that polytheism and idolatry naturally arose. And who knows how many millions of years human reason might have wandered in these erring ways, although some individuals in all lands and at all times knew them to be erring ways, if it had not pleased God by a new impulse to give it a better direction?

8. But since God could not or would not reveal himself any longer to each single individual, he chose a single people for special education, the rudest and most uncivilized, in order to train it from the very beginning.

[Paragraphs 9 to 52 show how monotheism, or the doctrine of one God, was revealed to the Jews, and this moral education promoted by a system of temporal rewards and punishments, according as they obeyed or transgressed the commands of the Almighty. But when the Hebrew Bible, as an elementary hornbook, became gradually unsuited to the growing intellect of the children of Israel, their teachers the Rabbins resorted to mystical and allegorical interpretations, and forced new ideas into the text wholly foreign to their original meaning. This course of instruction warped the mind of the pupil, making him petty, crafty, captious, fond of subtleties and sophistries, and incapable of seeing things in their true light — in short, cabalistic and superstitious.]

53. It was therefore necessary for a better teacher to come and snatch the obsolete primer from the hands of the child. Christ came.

[In paragraphs 54–77, Lessing discusses the tenets of this new teacher and his disciples, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the dogmas of the Trinity, of Original Sin, and of the Atonement; and arrives at the conclusion that «the development of real truths into truths of the reason is absolutely necessary if they are to be of any help to the human race.»]

78. It is not true that speculations concerning these things have ever wrought mischief or been hurtful to civil society.

This reproach should be made, not to the speculations themselves, but to the folly and tyranny that would hinder these speculations and grudge to men the free exercise of their thoughts.

79. On the contrary, such speculations, however they may result in individual cases, are incontestably the fittest exercises of the human mind, so long as the human heart is at most only capable of loving virtue for the sake of its consequences in conferring eternal happiness.

80. For since this selfishness of the human heart exists, the desire to exercise the mind exclusively on that which concerns our physical necessities would tend rather to dull it than to sharpen it. The mind must in sooth be exercised on intellectual objects, if it is to attain its full illumination and produce that purity of heart which makes us capable of loving virtue for its own sake.

81. Or shall the human race never attain this highest degree of enlightenment and purity? Never?

82. Never? Let me not be guilty of such blasphemy even in my thoughts, All-gracious One! Education has its purpose in the race not less than in the individual. What is educated, is educated for something.

83. The flattering prospects which are offered to the youth, the honor and prosperity which are pictured to him,—what are these but means of training him up to be a man who will be able to do his duty, even when these prospects of honor and prosperity fail!

84. This is the aim of human education, and may not divine education attain as much? What art succeeds in doing with the individual, shall not nature succeed in doing with the whole? Blasphemy! Blasphemy! [In other words, it is blasphemy to doubt this.]

85. No! it will come, it will surely come, the time of perfect development: when man, the more firmly he feels convinced of an ever better future, will have less need of borrowing from this future the motives of his actions; when he will do good because it is good, not because he expects arbitrary rewards, which were formerly designed merely to fix and strengthen his inconstant recognition of the inner and better rewards of virtue.

86. It will surely come, the time of a new, eternal gospel, which is promised us even in the elementary books of the New Covenant.

94. Why may not each individual have already existed once in this world?

95. Is this hypothesis so absurd because it is the oldest, or because the human mind hit upon it before the mental powers had been dissipated and weakened by the sophistry of the schools?

96. Why may not I already have taken all the steps towards perfection which mere temporal rewards and punishments can induce man to take?

97. And why not again all those which the prospects of eternal reward so strongly aid us to perform?

98. Why should I not return as often as I am fitted to acquire new knowledge and new capacities? Do I take away with me so much at once that it is perhaps not worth the while to come again?

99. Or because I forget that I have been here? Well for me that I forget it! The remembrance of my former state would permit me to make only a poor use of the present. And what I must forget now, have I forgotten it forever?

100. Or because too much time would thereby be lost to me? Lost? What have I then to lose? Is not all eternity mine?

THE DIFFERING SPHERES OF POETRY AND PAINTING

From 'Laocoön'

If it be true that painting uses for its imitations wholly different means or signs from poetry,—namely, forms and colors in space instead of articulate tones in time,—if it be incontestable that these signs must bear a suitable relation to the thing signified, then coexistent signs can represent only coexistent objects, and successive signs only successive objects.

Coexistent objects are called bodies; consequently bodies with their visible attributes are the proper objects of painting.

Successive objects are called in general actions; consequently actions are the proper objects of poetry.

Bodies exist, however, not only in space, but also in time. They continue, and at every moment of their duration appear differently and in different relations to each other. Each of these momentary appearances and relations is the effect of a preceding and can be the cause of a succeeding one, and therefore the centre of an action; consequently painting can imitate actions, but only suggestively through bodies.

On the other hand, actions cannot exist in themselves, but must inhere in certain beings. So far as these beings are bodies or are regarded as bodies, poetry describes bodies, but only suggestively through actions.

Painting can use in its coexistent compositions only a single moment of the action; and must therefore choose the most pregnant one, which will render what precedes and follows most comprehensible.

In like manner poetry in its progressive imitations can use only a single property of bodies; and must therefore choose the one that awakens the most sensible image of the body, for the purpose to which it is to be put.

Hence the rule of singleness in picturesque epithets and of frugality in descriptions of material objects.

I should have less confidence in this dry deduction, if it were not fully confirmed by the practice of Homer; or if it were not rather the practice of Homer, from which I have derived it. The grand style of the Greeks can be determined and elucidated only by these principles, which are also justified by the opposite style of so many modern poets, who wish to vie with the painter in provinces in which they are necessarily surpassed by him. . . .

Homer has usually but one stroke for one thing. A ship is to him now the black ship, now the hollow ship, now the swift ship, at most the well-rowed black ship. Further than this he does not indulge in any word-painting of the ship. But he makes a minute picture of the starting, the sailing, or the landing of the ship; a picture from which the painter who wishes to put it all on canvas would be obliged to make half a dozen pictures.

THE LIMITATIONS OF «WORD-PAINTING»

From ‹Laocoön›

WHAT I have been saying of corporeal objects in general applies even more forcibly to beautiful ones.

Physical beauty results from the harmony of a number of parts which can be embraced in one glance. It is therefore essential that those parts should be close together; and since things whose parts are close together are the proper subjects of painting, that art alone can represent physical beauty.

The poet, who can only set down one after another the elements of the beautiful object, should therefore abstain wholly from the description of physical beauty by itself. He ought to feel that these elements arranged in sequence cannot possibly produce the same effect as if in juxtaposition; that the comprehensive glance we try to throw back over them at the end of the enumeration produces no harmonious picture; and that it transcends the power of human imagination to realize the effect of a given pair of eyes, a given nose, and a given mouth together, unless we can call to mind a like combination in nature or art.

Here again Homer is the model of models. He says — Nireus was handsome; Achilles was very handsome; Helen was of godlike beauty. But he is nowhere enticed into giving a minuter detail of their beauties. Yet the whole poem is based on Helen's loveliness. How a modern poet would have reveled in specifications of it!

Even Constantine Manasses tried to adorn his bare Chronicle with a portrait of Helen. I feel grateful to him for the attempt; for really I should not know where else to turn for so striking an example of the folly of venturing on what Homer's wise judgment refrained from undertaking. When I read in his book —

> «She was a woman passing fair, fine-browed, finest complexioned,
> Fine-cheeked, fine-featured, full-eyed, snowy-skinned,
> Quick-glancing, dainty, a grove full of graces,
> White-armed, voluptuous, breathing out frank beauty,
> The complexion very fair, the cheeks rosy,
> The countenance most charming, the eye blooming;
> Beauty unartificial, unrouged, her own skin,
> Dyed the brightest rose-color a warmer glow,
> As if one stained ivory with splendid purple.
> Her neck long, passing white, whence in legend
> The Swan-born they termed the beautiful Helen,» —

it is like seeing stones rolled up a mountain, on whose crest they are to be built into a noble structure, but all of which roll down the other side. What picture does this huddle of words leave with us? How did Helen look? No two readers in a thousand would have the same mental image of her. . . .

Virgil, by imitating Homer's self-restraint, has achieved a fair success. His Dido is only the very beautiful (*pulcherrima*) Dido. All the other details he gives refer to her rich ornaments and superb apparel. . . . If on this account any one turned against him what the old artist said to one of his pupils who had painted an elaborately dressed Helen,—« You have painted her rich because you could not paint her lovely,»—Virgil would answer: « I am not to blame that I could not paint her lovely. The fault is in the limitations of my art, and it is to my credit that I have kept within them.»

LESSING'S ESTIMATE OF HIMSELF

In the Concluding Number of the ‹Hamburg Dramaturgy›

I AM neither an actor nor a poet. People have honored me occasionally with the latter title, but it is because they have misunderstood me. The few dramatic attempts which I have ventured upon do not justify this generosity. Not every one who takes a brush in his hand and dabbles in colors is a painter. The earliest of these attempts of mine were dashed off in those years when desire and dexterity are easily mistaken for genius. If there is anything tolerable in those of a later date, I am conscious that I owe it all to criticism alone. I do not feel in myself that living fountain that rises by its own strength, and by its own force shoots up in jets so rich, so fresh, so pure! I am obliged to press it all up out of myself with forcing-pump and pipes. I should be so poor, so cold, and so short-sighted if I had not learned in some measure modestly to borrow foreign treasures, to warm myself at another's fire, and to strengthen my sight with the lenses of art. I have therefore always been ashamed and vexed when I have read or heard anything derogatory to criticism. Criticism, it is said, stifles genius; whereas I flatter myself I have received from it something very nearly akin to genius. I am a lame man, who cannot be edified by a lampoon against crutches.

Criticism, we may add, is like the crutch too in this respect,—that it helps the cripple move from place to place, but can never make a racer of him. If through criticism I have produced something better than a man of my talents could have produced without its aid, still it costs me so much time, I must be so free from other pursuits and so uninterrupted by involuntary diversions, I must have all my reading so at command, must be able at every step so quietly to run over all the observations I have ever made of manners and passions, that no one in the world could be more unsuited than I, to be a worker whose task it should be to supply a theatre with novelties.